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Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-95-115 *15 June 1995*

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Palestinian Affairs

PLO To Examine 'Irresponsible' Force-17 Activity

TA1406111795 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1000 GMT 14 Jun 95

[FBIS Translated Text] PLO head Yasir 'Arafat has ordered that a Palestinian commission of inquiry be set up to examine last night's incident in which 3 Palestinians were killed near Rafah by IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldiers' fire. Palestinian Authority sources expressed the hope that the incident will not impede the continuation of the negotiations with Israel. Our correspondent in the south Eli Bohadana reports:

[Begin recording] [Bohadana] A grave incident took place this morning on the Israeli-Egyptian border near the Rafah crossing. An IDF unit patrolling the area came across a squad of infiltrators who were attempting to cross from the autonomy area into Egypt. [as heard] The parties exchanged fire and a Palestinian police officer, Darwish Isma'il Abu-Hatallah, was killed. Two other Palestinians who were with him fled, but were arrested by the Egyptians; one of them was wounded and the other was armed with a Kalashnikov.

At the time this incident took place, another IDF unit came under fire several hundred meters to the west of the first. The fire was opened by a second squad, made up of three Palestinians — one is an officer on Force-17, another person was killed in the shoot out, and a third person managed to flee into the autonomy area.

Colonel Yosi Gez, deputy commander of the IDF forces in the Gaza Strip, holds a grave view of the incidents, and rejects claims that the soldiers were reckless.

[Gez] There was no mistake. We hold a grave view of the fact that a Palestinian officer, in uniform and carrying a Palestinian police badge, opens fire from a Kalashnikov rifle at our forces who spotted him and saw he was armed. Security in this area is fully under the IDF's responsibility. We found a Kalashnikov and shells on the site. No argument can be made against the facts, I believe.

[Bohadana] Our correspondent Hanan Schlein reports that PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat has ordered that a commission of inquiry be set up to examine the involvement of Force-17 members in the incident last night. His spokesman, Nabil Abu-Rudaynah, confirmed that the two had belonged to 'Arafat's bodyguard unit, adding that their act was independent and irresponsible. Abu-Rudaynah expressed the hope that the incident does not impede the continuation of the negotiations between Israel and the PLO. [end recording]

PNSF: Israel Responsible for Gaza Incident

JN1406142895 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1100 GMT 1100 GMT 14 Jun 95

[Telephone interview with PNSF official spokesman Khalid Mismar by Ahmad Zaki; place and date not given; from the "Today's Events" feature — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Zaki] Khalid Mismar, official spokesman for the Palestinian National Security Forces [PNSF], good afternoon.

[Mismar] Good afternoon.

[Zaki] What actually has led to the martyrdom of three Palestinian citizens in the Gaza Strip?

[Mismar] In fact, brother Ahmad, Palestinian and Israeli committees are investigating the tragic incident. We, however, hold Israel totally responsible for the crime. It is responsible for blocking the return of the deportees, although there is a decision allowing them to return. The two other martyrs are not members of the president's guards. They acted on their own while they were off duty in order to give assistance to a helpless deportee. I would like to say that the Israeli side should implement the provisions of the agreement. Israel has long been resorting to procrastination and weak pretexts. We fear that while we are awaiting the 1 July deadline, some extremist Israeli generals—here I recall the Bet Lid operation in which some Israeli officers were involved—spiteful settlers, or Palestinian opposition elements will try to block the Palestinian Authority's efforts to control the rest of the occupied West Bank. Therefore, brother Ahmad, I say that the responsibility lies with Israel, which has failed to implement the provisions of the agreement, including the return of the deportees. May God have mercy on the martyrs. Our road is not strewn with roses. It will remain thorny and covered with blood until we establish our independent Palestinian state with holy Jerusalem as its capital, God willing.

[Zaki] Palestinian National Security Forces spokesman Kahlid Mismar, thank you.

[Mismar] You are welcome.

Al-Husayni on Talks, Irish Foreign Minister Visit

TA1406124595 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1000 GMT 14 Jun 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Faysal al-Husayni says it's still possible to meet the July 1st target date for extending Palestinian autonomy to the West Bank, but warned that there can be no agreement on elections without the participation of East Jerusalem residents. He also

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confirmed that Irish Foreign Minister Dick Spring will be visiting the Orient House despite Israeli objections. Faysal al-Husayni spoke with reporter Mark Weiss this morning:

[Weiss] Faysal al-Husayni said it is still possible to meet the July 1st deadline if, in his words, Israel is serious. But on the question of elections, he warned that there can be no agreement without including East Jerusalem residents as voters and candidates.

[Al-Husayni] And due to the agreement Palestinians in Jerusalem will have the right to participate in voting and electing. Without it, it can't go, because before everything we are part of the Palestinian people. Secondly, the agreement says that.

[Weiss] Al-Husayni confirmed that his planned meeting with Irish Foreign Minister Dick Spring will go ahead at the Orient House next week.

[Al-Husayni] The foreign minister of Ireland will visit the Orient House and we will receive him as the same way that we received other foreign ministers.

[Weiss] Now, we understand Israel has tried to stop this visit to the Orient House.

[Al-Husayni] In this case they are violating the agreement.

[Weiss] Under European Community guidelines foreign ministers visiting Israel are advised to meet Palestinian representatives at the Orient House. Heads of state and prime ministers are advised not to.

Concerning yesterday's action by Jewish settlers at Barqan, al-Husayni urged the government to take firm action.

[Al-Husayni] I believe it is another violation of the agreement, and I believe this will not help at all the peace process. On the contrary, it can harm it deeply. I hope that the government will take the right steps to stop this development. [end recording]

Al-Husayni Urges Israel To Curb Settlers' Practices

JN1406155695 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1130 GMT 14 Jun 95

[Telephone interview with Faysal al-Husayni, "head of the Palestinian negotiating team," by Ibrahim Milhim; place and date not given; from the "Today's Events" feature — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Milhim] Mr. Abu-al-'Abd [Faysal al-Husayni]: Good afternoon.

[Al-Husayni] Good afternoon.

[Milhim] The settlers' escalation and provocations are on the increase. Yesterday, they opened fire on your house.

[Al-Husayni] As a matter of fact, this is true. Given their views regarding the possibility of the continuation of the peace process, and the possibility of achieving separation, redeploying troops, and liberating cities and villages from Israeli occupation, the settlers appear to have become extremely anxious. This is what has prompted them to carry out the sort of crazy acts they are carrying out right now.

[Milhim] Do you believe that these settlers enjoy the support of some parties within the Israeli military establishment?

[Al-Husayni] I do not rule out this possibility. I am well aware that there are extremist hard-liners within the Israeli Army. I do not rule out at all the possibility that several officers, soldiers, or military officials could be doing things that are outside the general policy line.

[Milhim] Now that the [1 July] deadline is approaching, the provocative settler practices against Palestinian national institutions and Palestinians seem to be on the increase.

[Al-Husayni] Yes, that is very true. Whenever the settlers see peace and quiet in the area, they embark on provocative operations to scuttle this climate so that they may later argue that there can be no decisions or moves unless there is quiet, security, and stability.

[Milhim] Mr. Faysal al-Husayni: What measures have you taken to protect Palestinian institutions from Israeli provocations, particularly since we are coming close to the 1 July deadline?

[Al-Husayni] Well, guards are deployed in the institutions known to be under threat in Jerusalem. We are being cautious and vigilant. We have also informed world states of the relevant facts. We are attempting to mobilize an international campaign, sometimes involving pro-peace Israeli forces, to make it hard for settlers to proceed with these practices. However, this does not mean we can put a complete end to these practices. Despite all these endeavors, the Israelis will continue to engage in hostile moves here or there.

[Milhim] Three hundreds settlers have been given permission to stage a demonstration before the premises of the Ministry of Information in Ramallah.

[Al-Husayni] As I have told you, they will continue with their provocations and acts of defiance. They are acting out of anxiety and fear. They are afraid of the consummation of the peace process.

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[Milhim] But this could lead to more serious developments, such as the attack on the Ibrahimi Mosque?

[Al-Husayni] That is why the Israeli authorities, which claim to be committed to the peace process and to the agreement, are required to take deterrent and real measures to halt the inappropriate practices of these people.

'Abd-Rabbuh on Settlers' Protests in al-Birah

JN1406191095 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1730 GMT 14 Jun 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Hundreds of citizens staged a sit-in in front of the Ministry of Information premises in the town of al-Birah this afternoon. They condemned the provocations of the settlers, who demanded that the premises be closed. The Israeli occupation troops deployed in front of the Ministry of Information had been reinforced, and helicopters overflew the area when the settlers passed by, honking their car horns and waving their arms in threatening gestures.

The Israeli occupation troops asked the citizens to remove the signs and the portraits of His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat. Nonetheless, the citizens rejected the provocations of the occupation troops.

In a related development, Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, minister of culture in the National Authority, held the Israeli Government responsible for these provocations, particularly since it authorized the riots staged by the settlers in front of the Ministry of Information. 'Abd-Rabbuh added that this move by the government is tantamount to an official endorsement of the settlers' assaults.

Additionally, the Ministry of Information issued a statement, reviewing the settlers' practices, and reiterating the ministry employees' determination to confront settlers.

PA Calls For Israeli Response on Squatters

TA1406113895 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 14 Jun 95 p A2

[Report by Yosef Algazi]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestinian leadership was yesterday closely following the settlers' activity in the territories, and especially the reaction by the Israeli Government and the IDF [Israel Defense Forces]. A senior Palestinian official yesterday said: "The level of determination shown by the official Israeli response to these provocations by the settlers will demonstrate the Rabin government's readiness to implement the next stage in the interim accord. The settlers' actions harm us Palestinians, undermine the credibility of the Israeli Government, and place the entire peace process at risk."

Marwan Kanafani, Palestinian Authority [PA] Chairman Yasir 'Arafat's adviser, said yesterday: "Our position with regard to the settlements is clear. We demand the dismantling of the settlements and the evacuation of the settlers from the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and Jerusalem. The settlers are a foreign body sitting on land that is not theirs. "However," Kanafani added, "since we agreed not to discuss the settlements during the present stage of the negotiations, all we ask is that the Israeli Government prevent their expansion and restrain the settlers. The settlers are a time bomb. Without the government's material assistance and the large quantities of weapons it places at their possession, the settlers would not be able to hang on and would not permit themselves to run amok and harm Palestinians at every opportunity."

Kanafani asserted that the settlers set up roadblocks, conduct searches in Palestinian homes, damage Palestinian property, and offend the feelings of local residents. "The Israeli Government and the IDF, which have the control on the ground, are fully responsible for reigning in the settlers. At this sensitive stage of the talks with the Israeli Government, the settlers' rampaging in the West Bank and the lack of any suitable response by the Israeli authorities may derail the entire peace process," Kanafani warned.

Marwan al-Barghuthi, the secretary general of the Fatah organization in the West Bank also addressed the settlers' activities and said: "The Israeli Government must today face the test posed by the settlers. The government will decide whether or not the settlers will be prevented from continuing their rampage. The Palestinians in the territories will certainly not greet the settlers with flowers. We will not remain silent if provoked."

Security Chief Preparing West Bank Towns' Takeover

TA1506064495 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 15 Jun 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestinian Authority is preparing for the possibility that the redeployment agreement with Israel will be signed by 7 July and that the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] will start withdrawing its forces from the West Bank towns a week later.

Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that a Gazan delegation headed by General Zakariya Ba'lushah, deputy chief of the Palestinian intelligence service, came to the region to open offices in all the towns in order to coordinate the entry of the Palestinian police forces. In Gaza, it is said that Ba'lushah has a commitment from Hamas' [Islamic Resistance

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Movement] military arm in Gaza to cease attacks for a limited period.

United Kingdom Recognizes Passport

JN1306140995 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1300 GMT 13 Jun 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The United Kingdom has recognized the Palestinian passport issued by the Palestinian National Authority [PNA]. This came in a message President Yasir 'Arafat received from the British consul general, informing him that Her Majesty's Government has recognized the passport issued by the PNA as an identity card and for visa purposes.

Al-Zahhar: Party Not 'Alternative' to Hamas

MM1406144795 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 11 Jun 95 p 4

[Report on interview with Hamas spokesman in Gaza Dr. Mahmud al-Zahhar by Husayn Hijazi; date not given: "Hamas Spokesman in Gaza Tells AL-HAYAH: Military Action Could Be Stopped in the Authority's Territory and Mediation With the Organization Has Made Some Steps Forward"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gaza — Dr. Mahmud al-Zahhar, spokesman for the Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas, has described the situation of the Palestinians after the lapse of a year after the establishment of the Palestine Authority as "a crisis, impasse and dead end on all levels."

Dr. al-Zahhar was speaking during an interview with AL-HAYAH. He added: "The situation demands that the Hamas movement, which the Palestinian people look upon as a dutiful son, search for a formula to save the Palestinians from this impasse." He did not rule out the possibility of this formula taking the form of an attempt to find some basis for agreement with the Authority leading to the cessation of military operations in the autonomous rule areas, which he said have never been an end in themselves for any side, thus giving the Palestinian Authority a truce or a chance to test Israel's intentions on the one hand, and to stop using Hamas as a scapegoat, blaming it for its own mistakes and the failure of the [Oslo] Accord, on the other hand. He said in this regard: "We shall leave the Oslo Accord to run its course and so succeed or fail. We will give it plenty of rope so that we may see what fruit this [peace] process will bring."

Al-Zahhar began his interview by saying that it was never the intention or objective of Hamas, at any time whatsoever, to seize authority or to fight the Authority, adding: "We said a year ago that when we are pressured [by the Palestinian Authority], we will unload this pressure in a different direction [against the Israelis]. But what has happened is that the Authority has gone too far in its practices and transgressions. The question facing us was: How can we get out of this situation, this impasse?" He answered his question by saying that the way out lies in one of two alternatives: "Either enter into a civil war which will be the end for us all, or search for a way to dissuade the Authority from continuing with its actions. This latter solution, which we favor, demands two conditions: Firstly the finding of a solution for the pending issues between us and the Authority, and secondly, the drawing up of a formula for military action."

He explained the attitude of his Hamas movement toward this latter question by saying: "Military action is not an end in itself but has been and continues to be a mere means. For in the days of the Prophet Muhammad, God bless his soul and grant him grace, military action was a means of self-defense and remained so until the forces of the Romans and the Persians began to launch wars of annihilation against the Muslims.

"Consequently our position on this question is clear: Military action inside the territories of the autonomous rule could be discussed, that is, the Palestinian Authority could be given the opportunity to verify Israel's intentions and to stop using us as a scapegoat for its mistakes, for a period of one month, two months, or even more. But as to military operations inside the occupied territories, this will continue."

Dr. Al-Zahhar denied that this attitude on Hamas' part was the result of a feeling of weakness or a change of tactics, saying that "it stems basically from political considerations which dictate Hamas' attitude as a major movement and as a dutiful son of the Palestinian people. It also stems from Hamas' sense of responsibility, because when the people suffer from such a crisis, it is the duty of Hamas to find the conditions that bring comfort to the people and save them from pressures. For it is not one of the objectives of Hamas to punish the Palestinians."

Dr. Al-Zahhar said he was astonished by the surprise and denunciation expressed by some people toward the differences within Hamas or toward the existence of varying points of views inside it, and asked: Were there no variant views in the days of the Prophet Muhammad, God bless his soul and grant him grace? Did not the Prophet's companions have different views on the question of prisoners of war, with some saying that they should be killed while others wanted to ask for ransom for them? Were there not conflicts of opinions during the Badr and other battles [fought by the Prophet]? But did these conflicts lead to the breakup of the Muslims'

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ranks and the formation of a party by Abu Bakr or by 'Umar ibn al-Khattab?

He said that "the strength of Hamas lies in its cohesion. Until now, we have never heard that Hamas had been broken up, despite the numerous schisms suffered by most of the Palestinian detachments. But there are some who wish Hamas to break up. It would be unnatural if there were no differences."

Speaking of Hamas' strategy for the coming stage, Dr. Al-Zahhar said: "We proclaim from the top of the minarets that our strategy is based on the creation of a greater Islamic state covering every land in which Islam exists. As Hamas, we concentrate in the first place on Palestine, the whole of Palestine from Ra's al-Naqurah [uppermost tip of Palestine] to Rafah and from the river Jordan to the sea. This is our strategy."

Al-Zahhar, however, accepted the possibility of concluding a truce with Israel, saying: "A truce could be concluded between us and Israel lasting for a month, or two, or four. But the truce is not a peace plan, because we do not recognize Israel's right to exist or its right to dominate any part of Palestine. This is because the Jews have no rights whatsoever in Palestine except under the auspices of an Islamic state. In this sense, there could be a truce, within the framework of our phased objectives, with the Authority or with Israel. But nobody in Hamas can concede one inch of Palestine."

Asked if Hamas would be ready now to give the Authority a chance by accepting the conclusion of a truce with Israel, Dr. al-Zahhar replied that all the time, Hamas has called for giving such an opportunity to the Authority and "our position has not changed. We have defended and continue to defend the Authority so that it will have every chance and so everyone will find the right course and realize who is laying down the obstacles: Is it Israel or Hamas?"

He summarized the Hamas movement's attitude by saying: "A formula should be found to embrace all contradictions in order to steer the boat to the shores of safety. If the Authority wants to steer the rudder, then so be it, but Hamas will still be the compass and will remain so until the boat reaches its destination."

With regard to the dialogue with the Authority, he said that as far as Hamas is concerned there is nothing that cannot be discussed, because everything is on the table. He disclosed that a certain quarter has been mediating between Hamas and the Authority, and that this quarter has so far made great strides forward calmly and without publicity. But he added that any agreement that may be reached has to be concluded abroad between the Hamas leadership and the PLO leadership under Arab or international auspices "because this issue is not a minor one and because we want guarantees that the rights of the Palestinian people will not be lost."

Asked if this is a condition of any agreement, Dr. al-Zahhar denied that that is a condition, but added that this is the formula that could lead to an agreement "because Hamas is part of a worldwide movement and because half of the PLO is in the inside while the other half is abroad and the half abroad is the more effective and more able to formulate matters."

Asked about the framework which defines Hamas' plans and policies in the current phase, Al-Zahhar said it consists of four points:

"Firstly, we will leave the Oslo Accord to run out of steam either with success or with failure, and will give it plenty of rope to see what fruits this process will bring.

"Secondly: In the meantime, we will work to fortify the Palestinian people against any attempt to undermine the achievements they have acquired through their Intifadah. This involves the role of the national institutions be they educational, social, sports, or health institutions or the organizations and parties themselves.

"Thirdly, these institutions must be developed so that a basis could be laid for placing the Authority at the service of the masses.

"Fourthly, we shall seek to give the people the freedom to choose. We wish there to be no other system but the Islamic system in the land of Palestine. But in order to realize this wish, we must not force anyone to adopt Islam, because we respect plurality and still more because we want to give people the opportunity to go through the experience of choosing Islam. If people choose to adopt a principle other than that of Islam, then we will respect this. But if they choose Islam then the other side must respect the people's choice."

Concluding, Dr. Al-Zahhar said that the creation of a new party for his movement could not be an alternative to Hamas but a complementary part of its institutions. He also said that the third, independent group on the political map, and not Hamas nor Fatah nor any of the other [Palestinian] detachments, will be the one that will determine the roles, and that the true struggle is going on in this group to determine its choices, "because it will be the group that will form the economic environment and consequently the political environment of society" and that Hamas' attitude is to pin its hopes on time "so that all may discover, in their own way, the option we are calling for."

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Islamic Jihad Threatens Attacks After Rafah Clash

TA1406184095 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 14 Jun 95

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Islamic Jihad has threatened to stage terrorist attacks against Israel in the wake of the incident near Rafah today in which three Palestinians were killed.

In a rally held today at the Islamic University in Gaza, a leader of Islamic Jihad said that the border incident proves that the armed struggle against Israel must continue.

Knesset Member Talib al-Sani' of the Arab Democratic Party, who attended the rally, talked about the need to found a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital.

Jibril Hits 'Zionist-'Arafat Alliance'

MM1206112895 London FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH in Arabic June 95 pp 27-28

[Interview with Ahmad Jibril, secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)—General Command, by Ghayyath Nasir in Damascus; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Nasir] How do you evaluate the current Palestinian situation inside [the occupied territories]?

[Jibril] After 'Arafat had fenced himself and those around him inside the Gaza-Jericho protectorate and tried to exert all efforts to secure the implementation of the provisions of the agreement with the Zionist enemy through the suppression of the struggling forces inside Palestine and the rendering of daily services to the Zionist entity and the failure of these measures in the field of application, and after the dissipation of the glare and illusions of the slogans and promises about which the elements of the symbols of the autonomous rule had trumpeted, our people succeeded from the very first day of the actual entry of the autonomous Authority's police into Gaza and Jericho in proving, by their awareness, the true nature of the new conspiratorial chapter, though they were deceived by the autonomous Authority's allegations at one time. For the daily events which manifested the consecration of the occupation and created new burdens on all sectors of our people have helped to expose the autonomous Authority to even the most naive of people.

We see the repressive measures adopted by the autonomous Authority, which exceed even those practiced by the Zionist enemy, including the arrest and pursuit of the strugglers, the Filastin Mosque massacre, and the decision to disarm the Mujahidin, as nothing more than executive measures of the Zionist orders, thus clearly defining the autonomous Authority's true identity.

Hence the situation now prevalent inside Palestine is one of actual confrontation between those who have chosen the road of martyrdom, sacrifice, and the defense of their historic right and the sanctity of our land and cause [sentence as published].

We wish to point out that they are now facing two threats:

1) The permanent Zionist enemy.

2) The threat of the practices of 'Arafat's police and his policy, which are trying to shatter our people's unity, strike at their cohesion, and disperse their forces and objectives.

But the Islamic, pan-Arab, and national forces who are engaged in a real struggle against the Zionist enemy are exerting persistent efforts to rob the Zionists and 'Arafat of the opportunity to achieve this objective through their unified stand and their awareness of 'Arafat's acrobatic policy and its objectives, relying in this regard on the alertness and response of our people. We are directing our weapons and efforts toward Zionist targets, out of our conviction that the defeat of the Zionist-'Arafat alliance lies in the frustration of 'Arafat, his role, and his temporary capabilities, which means putting 'Arafat in his natural place as an outcast of our people and keeping him away from the arena of action and influence.

[Nasir] The autonomous Authority has resorted to the holding of dialogues with the Palestinian sides in Palestine. How do you view these dialogues?

[Jibril] The Authority of the limited autonomy tries to make the people believe that it has good intentions and for this reason it talks about democratic dialogues. But 'Arafat's history bears witness to his crooked style which conflicts with the true essence of the question of democracy. Because during the march of the Palestinian resistance, the democratic picture was completely absent from the Palestine National Council and its resolutions. Egotism and organizational fanaticism were clearly evident in all the PLO institutions. 'Arafat has mastered the democracy of the jungle of guns. He used to try, overtly and covertly, to liquidate his opponents. He has played a role that exceeded the Palestinian arena by offering help to some Arab security establishments and arresting and liquidating members of the opposition in some Arab countries. His policy has caused numerous rifts within Palestinian ranks and went to the extent of trying to liquidate some revolutionary forces within the Fatah Movement itself.

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As to the holding of dialogues in Palestine today, this is illogical and unreasonable. It is in essence more akin to a call for holding dialogue with the Zionist enemy, because the autonomous Authority which has entered into an alliance with the Zionist enemy and which was created in the first place by an American-Zionist decision, stands in the enemy camp and constitutes nothing more than one of the institutions of that camp.

In this context, we wish to ask what dialogue they are talking about.... Is it a dialogue for the endorsement and camouflaging of the Oslo Accord.... Or is it a dialogue for the suspension of the struggle operations against the Zionist enemy?! Or is it a dialogue for endorsing the decision to disarm the strugglers and for blessing 'Arafat's measures and sentences of imprisonment on the strugglers?!!

[Nasir] There has been a great deal of talk lately about the likelihood of the transfer of the PLO [headquarters] to the city of Ramallah. What are the objectives behind such a decision in your opinion?

[Jibril] 'Arafat has accustomed us to the playing of roles and the exchange of roles between him and a number of those who revolve in his orbit. The constant harping on the theme that there is one role for the Organization [the PLO] and another for the autonomous Authority is nothing more than an attempt to effect a mechanical separation with the aim of giving the impression that there are some who oppose and yet continue to work within 'Arafat's institutions and play an indirect role in strengthening the autonomous Authority. Consequently, the aim is to show that the Organization (which has become a mere mirage) constitutes a strong prop and a pressure card that supports the Authority of the limited autonomy. It is amid such climates that the talk is now spreading about the transfer of the PLO headquarters and the changing of portfolios and the expansion of the autonomous rule, and about transitional steps toward a wider role in the West Bank.

In short, all the aforementioned can be placed within the framework of fragile maneuvers aimed at demonstrating that the autonomous Authority possesses freedom of movement and has wide open horizons before it, though all the facts point to the opposite completely.

As is evident, 'Arafat cannot even appoint his personal guards without the prior permission of the Zionist entity's machinery. Even the times of his visits and the type of visitors he can receive are all subject to Zionist programming. Furthermore, the key to the simplest matters of his life lies in the hands of Zionist circles. For example, the telephone department of the Zionist entity announced a few days ago that it will stop all foreign telephone calls to the Strip because its bill was not paid on time. Thus every telephone 'Arafat has is governed by the Zionist enemy.

[Nasir] The Palestinian Authority resorted to the United Nations to prevent or secure the condemnation of the Israeli decision to annex Arab lands in Jerusalem. What do you think of this move?

[Jibril] Crying for the land of Jerusalem at the time when all the [Palestinian] lands have practically been handed over to the occupation and when the authority of the occupation is being consecrated and 'Arafat and those around him have surrendered the rights of our people...and recognized historic rights for the Zionist invaders, is a complete farce. What is worse is that 'Arafat speaks of Jerusalem and its sanctity and asks the Zionist government to retract its decisions when in fact he is subservient to that government.

Let us assume that he is serious in what he says...what cards does he have to persuade Rabin and the enemy government to go back on their decision? What elements of pressure does he possess to enable him to do so? Does 'Arafat think that the talks on the transitional period and the question of Jerusalem, which is to be discussed at a later date as he claims, will go beyond the question of "religious supervision" of some of the holy places? Even this supervision will not be complete nor independent in the full sense of the word.

The Zionists will continue to excavate in our holy places and dig under them as long as security and political sovereignty and power remain in their hands, and consequently all the clamor and cries raised by 'Arafat are no more than a storm and dust aimed at blinding the eyes and diverting attention from his capitulation and his squandering of rights.

We also believe that the United Nations is not the only quarter that should be addressed. For it is the wrong address to be approached by anyone who really wants to retrieve his rights or lift an injustice done to him or his people.

The United States, as expected, used the right of veto against the adoption of a resolution condemning the seizure of lands in Jerusalem and their return, thereby defying the votes of all other members who supported the condemnation resolution.

'Arafat's resorting to the United Nations despite his alliance and daily coordination with the Zionist enemy is nothing more than a cosmetic and theatrical move. Rabin does not object to giving his ally the opportunity to appear acceptable and not completely fettered. So 'Arafat is in the same situation as the Zionist (opposition) parties and those who share the same party with

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Rabin but differ with him in matters that would not detract from their entity's sovereignty.

[Nasir] What is your position toward the elections which are intended to be held in the occupied territory?

[Jibril] What is legally wrong cannot but be legislatively wrong as well. He who has conceded his rights and lives on crumbs from the Zionists' tables has no right to speak on behalf of our people. All the values that led to the Gaza-Jericho Accord and formed the basis of the so-called institutions of the limited autonomous administrative rule have been the by-product of an American-Zionist plot aimed at robbing our people's right to freedom, return, and self-determination in their entire land, let alone the rights they are talking about within the framework of Gaza and Jericho, which are aimed at overlooking our history and future.

Having acquired and consolidated what they wanted behind the backs of the submissive official Arab quarters, the Zionists now want to bestow a character of legitimacy on the ['Arafat] betrayal and camouflage it in democratic attire. We firmly believe that anything that is founded on the Oslo Accords amounts to persisting in treason and marching along the road of squandering our rights.

The true reading of our people's role and sound democracy that is not dominated by the American concept of peoples' rights demand primarily and before the signing of the Oslo or other accords that our people be consulted about the most grave issue that affects their future and their rights.

We in the Popular Front and the General Command are against this farce and the electoral game, and we will do all we can to expose the falsehood and risks involved in such maneuvers.

[Nasir] It is noted that the voice of the Palestinian resistance abroad has abated immensely. What do you say to that?

[Jibril] When we talk of Palestinian complementarity between the ranks of our people inside and outside the occupied territory and their living forces, we are not talking theoretically. Though our role and our voice might seem to some to be not as strong as it used to be, this does not mean that our capabilities and effectiveness have disappeared or weakened. We are now concentrating all our efforts on giving prominence to the voice of our people and that of their valiant Intifadah as well as the voice of the strugglers and Mujahidin inside Palestine. This is because the principal arena of the struggle lies inside Palestine. What has been taking place internally since the staging of the Intifadah is the thing that most strongly affects the Zionist enemy. We have always looked to the moment when the efforts strike roots inside Palestine. These efforts manifest themselves now through the continuation of the Intifadah in various forms and through qualitative operations based on a strong heritage and on a torrent of blood which the contemporary revolution has enriched further with the blood of thousands of martyrs.

Perhaps the spark of the Intifadah, which observers say was caused by the Qibyah operation (the glider aircraft), provides one of the important pointers which affirm the depth and nature of this complementarity and the course we have chosen to express the voice of our people in Palestine loudly. In fact, in the final analysis, we do not have two voices but one voice, one bridge, and one force.

[Nasir] How do you view inter-Palestinian relations today?

[Jibril] Palestinian relations are marred by the effects of some objective historical circumstances as well as by some subjective circumstances due to the conditions of some of the factions which might not reflect our vision of and our struggle for better conditions. But we believe that political and ideological differences should not constitute an obstacle in the way of the current urgent as well as future tasks headed by the toppling of Gaza-Jericho.

True, the situation is not as it should be. But what is taking place within the framework of the national Palestinian factions alliance constitutes a step in the right direction which could be developed further and which reflect the extent of the anxiety to activate the joint action.... What has been achieved so far has had a good effect in helping to expose the gravity of the Oslo Accord and the clearly evident rallying of the masses around the alliance factions.

The confusion and worry which has afflicted the Oslo allies was most clearly evident. Furthermore, the American concern was also evident as can be seen from the statements, threats, and pressures which the United States exercises against us and against our allies in the Arab and Islamic arenas.

[Nasir] How do you view the future of the Oslo Accord in the light of the events that are taking place?

[Jibril] To find out the future of this Accord, it suffices to look at the position of those in the Authority who stand against their people, open fire at them, and try day and night to assassinate their dreams. Any authority that stands against its people will inevitably collapse. This is the more true when it concerns a group of people who humiliated themselves before the enemy and armed themselves with the enemy's power and

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signed agreements that abounded with humiliation and disgrace. May I add also that the Zionist enemy has cast away all the provisions, no matter how small, which he thought to be contrary to his present interests and political tactics. We have seen how 'Arafat and his aides began to shout when they were totally exposed by the enemy and began to talk about the evils of the accord — but naturally in a mild reproachful manner — against their Zionist ally.

[Nasir] How do you view the imposition of the American embargo against Iran?

[Jibril] Iran's position is principled and firm toward the Arab and Muslim issue and has constituted part of the essence of the Iranian Islamic revolution since the very first day of its inception. The late Imam Ayatollah Khomeyni saw Israel as a cancerous gland which should be cut out.

It is natural for Iran then to be against the submissive plan which is being imposed on our nation. It is aware that it will pay the price for its attitude.... America has accustomed us to its taking hostile positions toward all those who stand in the way of its policy and the policy of American arrogance. The imposition of sanctions against Iran and the attempt to distort its stands and brand it with terrorism constitute an international act of deception whose political dimensions are known to the peoples and to all free states.

'Secret Plan' Against Hamas, Jihad Detailed

JN1206102695 Amman AL-MAJD in Arabic 12 Jun 95 pp 1, 11

[FBIS Translated Text] AL-MAJD has obtained the outline of a secret plan that is being vigorously carried out to dismantle Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and the Islamic Jihad Movement. The plan also seeks to force the two movements to drop their military option and follow a domesticated political opposition line instead of offensive, martyrdom-seeking resistance.

Jordan and Israel are partners in the preparation and execution of this plan. However, the more active and serious role is being played by the self-rule authority, since Hamas and the Islamic Jihad are primarily based in the Gaza Strip.

By citing the most accurate and reliable sources, AL-MAJD can confirm that Nasr Yusuf, chief of Palestinian National Security; Amin al-Hindi, chief of Palestinian General Intelligence; and Muhammad Dahlan, chief of Preventive Security in Gaza, have recently held a series of meetings with leaders of the Israeli security agencies of the Shabak and Shin Bet. During the meetings, the conferees discussed the plan proposed to strike at Hamas and the Islamic Jihad.

AL-MAJD has learned that Yasir 'Arafat, who is personally supervising the implementation of this plan, has given the go-ahead to his security agencies after the Hamas leadership turned down an offer by him to bring military operations against Israel to a complete halt.

AL-MAJD also learned that Brigadier General 'Abd-al-Razzaq al-Yahya met Musa Abu-Marzuq in Amman early last month and conveyed to him 'Arafat's offer. Abu-Marzuq, however, told him that the leadership of Hamas absolutely rejects this offer. This may also explain why the Jordanian security agencies deported Abu-Marzuq shortly after this development.

AL-MAJD further learned that the Palestinian security agencies, under 'Arafat's personal and direct supervision, have made desperate attempts to break the ranks of Hamas and the Islamic Jihad. Their failure to achieve a great success in this field so far has not prevented them from achieving some minor successes. Thus, they have managed to win over Shaykh Khadr Muhjiz, a Hamas leader who was deported to Marj al-Zuhur, and Shaykh 'Abd-al-'Aziz 'Awdah, a former leader of the Islamic Jihad.

'Arafat has set up a special security department for Muhjiz, named the "Vice Squad," assisted by 'Abd-Rabbuh Abu-Khusah, a former Hamas partisan. 'Arafat asked the two men to confine the membership of this department to elements from Hamas and the Islamic Jihad whom they can win over.

When 'Arafat and his security agencies obtained a secret leaflet issued by Hamas attacking the "Vice Squad" and warning against joining it, 'Arafat asked Muhjiz and Abu-Khusah to quickly form a political party under the name "National Islamic Party". 'Arafat did this to prevent the formation of a pro-Hamas party on the one hand and to win over more Hamas and Islamic Jihad members on the other.

On the same level, Islamic Jihad sources in Gaza told AL-MAJD that the movement does not rule out assassination attempts against its leaders in and outside the territories. The sources said that two security meetings were held; the first between Rabin and Palestinian security officials and the second between 'Arafat and Israeli security officials to discuss a detailed political, security, and media plan to undermine Hamas and the Islamic Jihad and disseminate rumors on divisions and disagreements within their ranks.

On press reports that there is a split within the movement led by Shaykh 'Abd-al-'Aziz 'Awdah, Dr. Fathi

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al-Shaqaqi, secretary general of the Islamic Jihad Movement, said that Muhammad Ahmad Samrah, who works for 'Arafat's intelligence after being expelled from the movement, issued a statement in Beirut on 5 June claiming there are acute differences within the Islamic Jihad Movement, and leveling many accusations against its secretary general. Samrah claimed that Shaykh 'Abd-al-'Aziz 'Awdah spearheads a group within the movement which is hostile to the secretary general.

Dr. al-Shaqaqi recalled what AL-MAJD and other papers had published in the middle of last October on how Shaykh 'Awdah was lured by two of 'Arafat's men, Abu-'Ali Shahin and Salih 'Abd-al-'Al, into going to Egypt on his way back to Gaza without the movement's knowledge where he discovered he had fallen victim to one of 'Arafat's intrigues. Al-Shaqaqi said: At the time, we removed Shaykh 'Awdah from the movement because he placed himself outside the movement by submitting to 'Arafat's intrigue. The movement, however, did not want to spotlight his dismissal in the media because it did not want to harm him and because he had no specific position within the movement, especially since his wavering position within the movement as far back as 1988 did not permit him to carry out any political activities that are worth mentioning.

Al-Shaqaqi concluded his statements to AL-MAJD by saying that the Islamic Jihad command is aware that what is taking place is part of a 'Arafat-Israeli plan to strike at the Islamic Jihad after making the public get accustomed to the existence of differences within its ranks and having the people believe that all future developments should be attributed to the differences within the movement and those responsible for these differences.

As for 'Abdallah al-Shami, an Islamic Jihad leader in Gaza, he told AL-MAJD that the Islamic Jihad command is still strong and cohesive in and outside the territories. Referring to rumors about resignations from the Shura Council, al-Shami said: Where are these leaders who have resigned?

For his part, Shaykh Nafidh 'Azzam, another Islamic Jihad leader in Gaza, denied there is a secret deal between the Islamic Jihad and the Palestinian Authority that led to the release of Shaykh al-Shami. 'Azzam said that al-Shaqaqi is the leader of the movement with all its agencies in and outside the territories, including the military wing "Qasam" and that what al-Shaqaqi says is binding to us and represents our stands and aspirations.

'Text' of 'Abd-al-Shafi's Party Platform

JN1306172295 Jerusalem AL-MANAR in Arabic 12 Jun 95 p 8

[FBIS Translated Text] Jerusalem—Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, chairman of the Palestinian Red Crescent Society in the Gaza Strip, has announced the launching of a new political movement he called "The Palestinian Democratic Construction Movement" [PDCM] [harakat al-bina' al-dimuqrati al-filastini].

Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi's announcement of the launch of this movement came at a news conference he held at the National Hotel in Jerusalem. At the news conference, the PDCM's platform was circulated. The platform explained the PDCM's identity, objectives, philosophy, areas of interest, and activities.

The following is the text of the PDCM's platform:

Text of the PDCM's Platform

The new phase being experienced by our Palestinian people, including the critical challenges they are facing, requires a streamlined and enlightened use of the Palestinians' abundant resources and capabilities. Numerous experiences and bitter difficulties have taught us that the achievement of this objective is possible only through sound and proper democratic practices.

To achieve this objective, we underline the importance of building a democratic construction movement for the Palestinian people in order to create a democratic system of government based on elections to a legislative authority, uphold the premise that the people are the source of all authorities, strengthen the rule of law, and protect man's natural and acquired rights in a state that belongs to Palestinians wherever they may be. In this state, the Palestinians will promote their national and cultural identity and enjoy complete equality of rights. Moreover, in this state, the Palestinians' religious and social beliefs, as well as their human dignity shall be safeguarded under a democratic parliamentary system based on the freedom of opinion and the freedom to form parties. In this state, the majority shall take care of the rights of the minority, whereas the minority shall respect the decisions of the majority. This democratic parliamentary system shall also be based on social justice, equality, and nondiscrimination in general rights on the basis of race, religion, color, or sex. This will be under the canopy of a constitution that ensures the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary. This endeavor will honor Palestine's spiritual and contemporary heritage in terms of tolerance and tolerant coexistence of religions throughout the centuries.

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The above is a quote from the Independence Declaration issued in November 1988.

The PDCM's Objectives

The PDCM is an independent Palestinian movement that seeks to build a civil Palestinian society. It has room for whoever believes in democracy, is committed to its promotion, and works to foster democratic traditions in the Palestinian community. It is opposed to any attempt to undermine its independence.

1. In its political line, the PDCM sticks to the Palestinian people's right to repatriation, self-determination, and establishment of an independent Palestinian state on the national soil with Jerusalem as its capital.

2. The PDCM underscores the unity of the Palestinian people. Furthermore, it reiterates that the PLO is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and the symbol of their unity.

3. The PDCM reiterates that the Palestinian state will be a homeland for Palestinians wherever they may be.

4. The PDCM is working for the dismantlement of the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including Jerusalem. It is also working for the dismantlement of settlements. It deems flagrant aggression settlement activities in these areas. It is to be recalled that settlement activities were condemned by UN Security Council resolutions, not to mention the world public.

5. The PDCM subscribes to the peace initiative announced on 15 November 1988 at the 19th session of the Palestine National Council. It also supports the relevant UN resolutions pertaining to the Palestinian refugees' right to repatriation or compensation. Moreover, it deems the achievement of peace a strategic objective.

6. The PDCM rejects Israel's attempts to force capitulation on the Palestinian people under the ongoing peace process. Likewise, it is opposed to the continued confiscation of lands, settlement expansion, annexation, and stepped-up repression. Similarly, the PDCM rejects Israel's claims to occupied Palestinian territories, including East Jerusalem; reiterates that any civilian or military construction or presence thereon is illegal; and believes that such practices will inevitably scuttle peace prospects and aggravate violence and tension in the region.

7. The PDCM believes that the building of a sophisticated and civilized civilian community by the National Authority requires the use of all Palestinian resources and capabilities.

8. The PDCM believes that the Palestinian homeland is a part of the greater Arab homeland. This requires the building of fraternal ties between our Palestinian people and other Arab peoples in order to promote the political, cultural, social, and economic rapprochement, and build it on strong and equitable foundations so as to ensure mutual respect and bring about strength, prosperity, and unity.

9. The PDCM believes that it is part of the forces promoting peace and democracy in the world. It supports the peoples' right to self-determination and works for the elimination of wars, nuclear disarmament, the dismantlement of mass destruction weapons, and the promotion of world peace.

The Philosophy of the PDCM

1. Based on the concepts and commitments explained earlier, the PDCM accommodates anyone who believes in and commits himself to democracy and works for spreading the democratic culture in the Palestinian community. The PDCM does not accept any attempt to divert it from its independent character.

2. The Palestinian people's confrontation of the challenges facing them requires work to remove our people from the frustration and despair they experienced as a result of the difficult situation and circumstances surrounding the Palestinian national struggle.

This also requires work to consolidate the Palestinian man's self-respect and boost confidence in his ability to confront the challenges in order to attain his legitimate rights. It also requires self-denial, boosting the morale, and believing in the importance of order, discipline, appreciation of time, and respect for others. Moreover, it requires coordinated work, organized cooperation, and creativity in the collective and voluntary initiatives.

3. The PDCM encourages the policy of cooperation, coordination, and voluntary work. It also emphasizes the role of national nongovernmental organizations in various fields.

4. The PDCM stresses the principle of social justice and equal opportunities.

5. The PDCM emphasizes the supremacy of law, respect for human rights, freedom of the press, and the principle of political pluralism.

6. The PDCM supports the woman's struggle for equality with man and for attaining her social, political, and economic rights.

7. The PDCM works for having in its leadership structure, organization, and mode of action whatever will achieve a democratic model that will help realize

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Palestinian unity without breaching the principle of pluralism.

8. The PDCM calls for building a civil society based on institutional authority and separation among the legislative, executive, and judiciary branches.

The PDCM's Concerns and Fields of Activity

In general, the PDCM focuses its concerns on the Palestinian community. It aims to provide all the characteristics of an organized civil society which pulsates with life, realizes its political and social rights, and works for entrenching and protecting these rights. In so doing, the PDCM moves in three main directions:

First: In the Political Field

A. Consolidating the Palestinian people's awareness of their legitimate national rights, the need to remove occupation, and their right to self-determination and sovereignty on their national soil.

B. Preserving the PLO and stressing its responsibility for leading the Palestinian people in and outside the territories, and demanding that it carry out its legitimate and legal democratic role under these crucial circumstances.

C. The PDCM will intensify efforts to release all political detainees.

D. Following the negotiating process and expressing views on it in an objective manner away from provocation, defamation, or accusation.

E. The PDCM stresses the importance of enhancing dialogue with the Israeli peace forces in order to consolidate mutual understanding between the Palestinian and Israeli peoples based on ending the occupation and fighting racism, as well as to recognize the right of all regional states, including a Palestinian state, to live in security, stability, and peace.

F. Activating the pursuit of democracy on all levels and pooling all efforts for free and democratic legislative elections which will be held following the Israeli Army's withdrawal in the presence of international supervision.

Second: In the Social and Daily Life Fields

The PDCM follows the Palestinian Authority's performance and expresses its objective views on positive or negative developments according to the following considerations:

A. Showing interest in the community's problems and interests and responding to all that achieves stability and tranquility.

B. Stressing the freedom of religions, the right of citizens to practice their religious rites in complete freedom, and the preservation and protection of all holy places.

C. Employing qualified Palestinians away from factional or personal considerations.

D. The PDCM seeks effective participation in protecting and safeguarding the local, neighboring, and world environment, so it will continue to be the appropriate place for man's existence and sound development.

E. Encouraging all that promotes performance and leads to the building of a modern national authority which can achieve the aspirations of the Palestinian people.

Third: In the Economic Field

The PDCM encourages the building of a Palestinian national economy that serves steadfastness and development and meets the needs of the masses.

Arab-Israeli Talks

Peres, al-Shar' May Meet 'Publicly' Mid-Aug

JN1506073295 Amman AKHBAR AL-USBU' in Arabic 15 Jun 95 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli political sources have said that Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres and Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' will meet publicly for the first time in Cairo or Alexandria in mid-August. The sources said the contacts held by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher in this respect have made significant progress.

Impact of Christopher Tour on Syrian Track Seen

MM1306150595 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 12 Jun 95 p 11

[Editorial: "Christopher's Optimism May Be Justified"]

[FBIS Translated Text] U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher has described his recent tour of the Arab region, which ended yesterday, as the most successful since he assumed his post, and he expressed optimism about the chances of comprehensive peace in the region.

To justify them in reality such statements cannot be without foundation. The U.S. secretary must have returned to his country with a draft agreement that would breath life back into the Syrian- Israeli track.

Christopher's biggest achievement was perhaps setting 27 June as the date for the meeting of the Syrian and Israeli chiefs of staff in Washington to discuss the security arrangements which should accompany the Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights.

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The political framework for the Syrian-Israeli peace treaty was probably agreed upon during Christopher's tour, and what remains is its practical implementation on the ground. That implementation is the responsibility of Syrian Chief of Staff General Hikmat al-Shihabi and his Israeli counterpart Ehud Baraq.

The disagreement between Israel and Syria was about the areas of the demilitarized zones on both sides, the timetable for the Israeli withdrawal, the size and nature of the normalization steps, and way of exchanging diplomatic representation.

Because the Syrian officials are the firmest Arab officials when it comes to discipline and not divulging any details to the press, the information leaked about the agreement most probably came from the Israeli side with only hints from the Syrian side about progress made and Syria's willingness to cooperate with the United States to ensure success of the peace process, in addition to some rare praise for Rabin for his statement admitting that the Golan is Syrian territory.

From the little information leaked about the U.S. secretary of state's talks in Damascus, the main stop on his tour, it can be concluded that concessions were made by both sides leading to the agreement on the meeting of the two chiefs of staff in Washington. At his joint press conference on the conclusion of his talks with President Mubarak 10 days ago Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad gave the impression that there was no need to raise the level of negotiation and arrange a meeting between senior military experts.

The Syrian concession was in accepting equality in the demilitarized zones in terms of the size and quality of equipment and in accepting Israel's view, which differentiates between mountains and plains, and its position on gradual withdrawal, in addition to an undertaking to prevent any Hizballah operations from southern Lebanon, as has been the situation on Syria's borders with Israel over the past 20 years.

The Israeli concession was in accepting partial normalization, in other words accepting diplomatic representation in stages, such as having offices in other friendly countries' embassies to look after each country's affairs in the beginning, as Tunisia did, with the level of representation raised as the withdrawal steps from the Golan Heights progress. That is in addition to leaving it to the Syrian leadership in Damascus to determine the size of the cuts in Syria's military capabilities.

What is certain is that any Syrian-Israeli peace agreement would change the shape of the entire Arab region and remove the last obstacle in the way of Arab normalization with Israel. It would end the hesitation of many, especially in the Gulf, about their cooperation with the Hebrew state.

The chances of a settlement between Syria and Israel have increased after Christopher's tour but it is difficult to make categorical statements in this connection because surprises will still be possible until the signing takes place and until doubt gives way to certainty.

Sources Say Peres To Visit Tunisia Early Jul

MM1406153195 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 14 Jun 95 pp 1, 4

[Report by Mahmud Abu-'Id and Abdallah Ould Mohamedi: "Israeli Reports of Peres Visit to Tunisia at Beginning of July"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Occupied Jerusalem, Nouakchott — While well-informed Israeli sources in occupied Jerusalem have confirmed that Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres agreed with Mauritanian Foreign Minister Mohamed Salem Lekhal during their meeting in Madrid the day before yesterday to exchange agricultural expertise and to discuss ways of bilateral cooperation, the sources also said that Peres will visit Tunisia at the beginning of July.

The meeting between Peres and Lekhal raised a number of questions about the course of Israel's attempts to normalize relations with Arab states. These questions were answered through the statements made by the Israeli sources, which confirmed that the liaison offices between Tunisia and Israel will open next month, and that an economic cooperation program among Israel, Tunisia, Morocco, and Mauritania will be announced during Peres' visit to Tunisia.

The sources added that extensive talks are being held to include Algeria in this program. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Delegate: Atmosphere of Talks 'Positive'

JN1406140495 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1300 GMT 14 Jun 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestinian-Israeli negotiations on the transfer of powers in the West Bank to the Palestinian National Authority are continuing.

Hasan 'Asfur, a member of the Palestinian delegation to these negotiations said the constructive and positive atmosphere of the current negotiations calls for optimism.

'Asfur said intensive negotiations will continue until tomorrow in a bid to reach an agreement on trade, industry, postal services, insurance, gas, and fuels.

Press reports said the Palestinian-Israeli Liaison Committee has met to investigate the Israeli escalation.

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Algeria

FIS Leaders Reportedly Hold 'Enlarged' Meeting

MM1406155595 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 14 Jun 95 pp 1, 6

[Unattributed report: "Algeria: Reports About Enlarged Meeting of Salvation Front Leadership"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Algiers, London, AL-HAYAH — It was reported in Algiers yesterday that a meeting was held some days ago at the residence of Shaykh Abbassi Madani, leader of the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS], attended by six FIS leaders including his deputy, Shaykh Ali Belhadj. The political sources who talked about the meeting did not explain the nature of the consultations among the FIS leaders and whether or not they reached any agreement.

The enlarged meeting of the FIS leaders comes after several meetings held recently between Mohamed Betchine, President Liamine Zeroual's adviser, and Shaykh Madani. It is believed that Betchine convinced Madani of the need for a meeting that would bring FIS leaders together, and that is what happened. According to the same political sources, the meeting brought the FIS leader and his deputy together with Shaykh Abdelkader Hachani (detained) and the four released shaykhs, namely Ali Djedi, Abdelkader Boukhamkham, Noureddine Chekara, and Kemal Kummazi. The meeting was held at Madani's residence in the heart of the Algerian capital.

No information was leaked about the nature of the FIS leaders' discussions nor the link between the meeting and the message sent by Shaykh Madani to President Zeroual. Sources close to some of the shaykhs concerned would neither confirm nor deny that the meeting took place, but there are rumors in Algiers that an "initiative" is expected on the occasion of Algeria's 33rd independence anniversary.

Informed sources believe that the military command has probably approved a new initiative involving the regime and the FIS provided that it is "the last" and that there would be a formula "renouncing violence" and acceptable to FIS, as well as agreement on participation in the elections.

Other sources speak of the crystallization of a plan for the revival of the idea of "wise men committee." The HAMAS Movement, led by Shaykh Mahfoud Nahnah, suggested that idea to President Zeroual recently and said that the presidency accepted the suggestion in principle.

Amidst these reports about contacts between the authorities and the FIS and among FIS leaders, the Armed Islamic Group [GIA], the most extremist of all groups, has repeated its rejection of any dialogue with the regime. In a statement carrying the number 33 and received by AL-HAYAH, it "completely dissociates itself from everything issued by the (national convenant) group including the FIS...because the legitimacy claimed by that group is not acknowledged by the GIA and does not exist in its vocabulary and because it stemmed from partisan deception and democratic heresy." It warned "anyone, whoever he may be, who contemplates trading Islam, the blood of the martyrs, the suffering of the oppressed, and the jihad of the mujahidin, for electoral deception and democratic heresy." The statement was signed by Bouabderrahmane Amin, the amir of the group, and was under the headline "the legitimate position regarding every alleged solution."

Resumption of Government-FIS Contacts Reported

Opposition Said 'Concerned'

MM1406141395 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 14 Jun 95 pp 1, 4

[Unattributed report: "Algeria Confirms Dialogue With Salvation Front Over Elections"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Algiers, London, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT — A source close to Algerian President Liamine Zeroual has confirmed to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the Algerian Government has resumed its contacts with the leadership of the outlawed [Islamic] Salvation Front [FIS]. However, the source declined to name members of the leadership with whom the dialogue is being conducted. The source did not deny recent reports that Ali Djedi and Abdelkader Khamkham are among these persons.

The source, who asked to remain anonymous, said that contacts with the FIS are part of "a general strategy aimed at persuading all groups to join the efforts to restore the democratic process." The source went on to say: "We are discussing a specific issue, namely the best way to organize the upcoming presidential elections. The FIS cannot nominate anyone as a party, but it can be arranged for it to support a candidate of its own choice."

The source said that the government has abandoned the idea of negotiating with the parties as one group and decided to begin the dialogue on a bilateral basis with the parties concerned.

Despite Foreign Minister Mohamed Salah Dembri's hints at the possible lifting of the ban on the FIS, the sources point out that that is unlikely to happen in the near future.

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The parties have begun to fear that the government might reach a separate agreement with the FIS excluding all the other parties.

Dr. Said Saadi, leader of the Rally for Culture and Democracy, has denounced reported contacts between the government and the FIS, describing them as a "treacherous step." He also said that the FIS cannot be trusted and that its participation in any election process would be aimed at one thing — "destroying democracy completely."

The other opposition parties too are concerned over the contacts with the FIS, because the Rome covenant parties want to negotiate with the government as one group.

The contacts have also aroused concern among FIS leaders in exile. They fear that this could be a trick by President Zeroual to divide the movement and to give foreign states, in particular France and the United States, the impression that Algeria is moving toward a national agreement.

Hardliners inside the regime are opposed to these contacts, insisting on excluding the FIS from political life in Algeria forever.

However, it is unlikely that the FIS as a whole will participate in the government's plans for the presidential elections unless an agreement is reached with its main leaders, Shaykhs Abassi Madani and Ali Belhadj, who are currently in prison. Because they have no direct role in the current negotiation process.

However, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT's sources say that Madani and Belhadj have knowledge of the developments and are receiving detailed reports on the talks between the government and the other FIS leaders. The sources said that "the two leaders know what is happening, and no one is seeking to exclude them. In fact it was they who asked to be temporarily excluded from the talks last October. They could return to the talks when they offer a positive sign."

Press Comments on Dialogue

LD1406203495 Paris Radio France International in French 1230 GMT 14 Jun 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Some newspapers reported this morning that the Algerian Government has resumed talks with the leaders of the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] in a bid to open up political debate in the country and put an end to three years of violence. Adala Benraad has more:

[Begin Benraad recording] The Algiers daily LA TRIBUNE, which has reported such contacts before, adds that the meetings have now gone well beyond the usual contacts between Abassi Madani and Ali Belhadj, and representatives of the government on the other. The Arab-language daily AL-HAYAT, based in London, reports a series of meetings between General Mohamed Betchine [adviser to President Zeroual] and Abassi Madani in the residence where Madani is under house arrest. The official line is that Abassi Madani is still being held in prison. These contacts are said to have led to a wider meeting of the main FIS leaders. The newspaper even quotes well-informed sources as saying that a major new political initiative could be announced on the occasion of the 33d anniversary of Algerian independence on 7 July.

This information has to be treated with great caution; for the time being, the Algerian authorities have neither confirmed nor denied the reports. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Statement Issued on Talks With al-Nahdah

LD1406223595 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 14 Jun 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Within the framework of the invitation extended by the head of state to the representatives of six political parties to discuss the written proposals these parties had submitted, a meeting took place at the Presidency today between the representatives of the Presidency and representatives of the Islamic al-Nahdah Movement. The Presidency issued a statement pointing out that the contents of the talks will be published in due course.

Egypt

Musa: Sanctions on Iraq 'Cannot Continue Forever'

NC1506101895 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0930 GMT 15 Jun 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 15 Jun (MENA) — Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has said that an Arab summit, whether a minisummit or one involving any number of countries, is required, noting the importance of preparing for such a meeting.

In an interview with AL-'ALAM AL-YAWM today, Musa added that Arab efforts to improve their situation will not stop. In this regard he referred to recent positive developments in the Arab arena represented by the agreement between Saudi Arabia and Yemen and between Oman and Yemen. "Despite this, I still see the summit as an important move for which there should be good preparations starting now," he said.

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Commenting on Arab reconciliation, he emphasized the need for psychological and political preparedness and good preparations for such a reconciliation.

As for the sanctions imposed on Iraq, Musa said: In our view Iraq is continuing to implement the Security Council resolutions. Therefore, he added, the sanctions have limits and cannot continue forever. The Iraqi people are suffering through these sanctions, which is a disaster that should be looked at from a humane point of view. He said there should be progress toward lifting the sanctions in exchange for Iraq's complete commitment to implementing the Security Council resolutions.

Al-Baz on Relations With Israel, New Press Law

NC1406112395 Cairo MENA in Arabic
1010 GMT 14 Jun 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Alexandria, 14 Jun (MENA) — Dr. Usamah al-Baz, first Foreign Ministry under secretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs, has stated that within the framework of the peace process in the Middle East, Egypt wants to remove the concept of territorial expansion from the Israeli mentality and to eliminate these ambitions bit by bit.

During his meeting with the members of the teaching staff of Alexandria University last night, al-Baz said that many Israelis view their ties with the Arabs from the perspective of military and cultural superiority. He noted that some Israelis still entertain the concept of superiority, indicating that this concept will gradually disappear because of present-day circumstances and ongoing processes that will define the regional restrictions and the international obligations between Israel and the neighboring countries.

Al-Baz affirmed that Egypt does not accept arguments based on the idea of Israel's territorial expansion in the region. He noted that many Israelis who have visited Egypt and have been in touch with the Egyptian people have realized that it is very difficult to control the Arab world. He said peace between the Arabs and Israel must be fair and balanced.

Al-Baz said Jerusalem is not only for the Jews because the Arabs and all religions have rights in this city. He noted that issues related to Jerusalem will be the subject of discussion in the future in view of the city's historical and religious importance. He noted that Israel seized a large part of west Jerusalem while east Jerusalem remained under Arab sovereignty exercised through Jordan. The majority of the east Jerusalem population was composed of Muslim and Christian Palestinians. However, the Israeli measures have changed this situation somehow.

Al-Baz stressed that the Israelis alone cannot settle the status of Jerusalem, which will be the subject of negotiations between the Arabs and Israel in the second phase of negotiations scheduled to begin next year. He also affirmed that no party has the right to impose a fait accompli so long as Jerusalem is the subject of negotiations. He noted that any attempt to impose a fait accompli will strip any future negotiations about the city of their meaning.

Regarding the postponement of the Rabat summit, al-Baz said the postponement is not "permanent." He said we called for this summit because of Israel's decision to confiscate 535 donums of Palestinian lands in Jerusalem. We then postponed the summit after Israel suspended the confiscation decision. He affirmed that the summit can be convened if new reasons or circumstances arise that require this.

Al-Baz expressed the hope that in the future Israel will not embark on any action that might jeopardize the remaining credibility of peace in this volatile region. He also expressed the hope that Israel has frozen and not just suspended the confiscation decision.

Regarding the future problems between Egypt and Israel, al-Baz said they are represented by the Israeli nuclear program because it is a military and not an economic program. This program upsets regional balance and security. He said peace must be accompanied by nuclear arms control in the region, referring in this respect to President Mubarak's initiative four years ago calling for the removal of the weapons of mass destruction from the region. He said although Egypt has not achieved all its demands regarding the Israeli nuclear program, it has imposed the subject on the agenda of the United Nations and Israel. From now on, Israel will not able to avoid talking about this issue, which is necessary for a security balance in the region.

Regarding the formation of an Arab economic bloc, al-Baz affirmed the importance of such a bloc to face the world's economic blocs. He affirmed the need for realistic thinking and a gradual program to form this bloc. He called on the Arab states to adopt a definite stand on this subject.

On the role of the United Nations and the Security Council in the current conflicts and wars in the various parts of the world, al-Baz said the Security Council and the United Nations must move from the phase of keeping peace to the phase of imposing peace, as happened in Somalia, Burundi, and Kuwait. He noted that the Security Council has not been able to do anything about certain problems, such as the Bosnia problem. He said the Council has double standards, dealing with some issues firmly and with other issues

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negatively. He noted that some neighbor states of Serbia, especially Russia, are providing the Serbs with weapons and ammunition while they do not permit other states to intervene, especially the Islamic states which are trying to help the Bosnian people. He affirmed that the Security Council has failed to play the role expected of it in the new world order, resulting in a decline in its role. Moreover, some states control the Council's decisions by using the veto to obstruct any agreements reached within the United Nations.

On the protection of Egyptians working abroad, al-Baz said the government is doing its utmost to protect the Egyptians working abroad. He noted, however, that this protection does not cover the domestic policy of the host states in which the Egyptian citizens work. The Egyptian citizens must respect the laws of these states. He called for not exaggerating individual incidents so that they will not be used as propaganda campaigns that poison relations between fraternal states.

On the law imposing stiffer penalties for publication crimes, al-Baz stressed that President Mubarak is keen on freedom of both the national and party press. He said dialogue among the parties concerned is the best way to solve the problem that has arisen over this law.

Regarding the fear expressed by some that they cannot express their opinion under the new law, al-Baz said the reaction of the national and party press is the best proof that they are not afraid. Everybody has expressed his opinion without restrictions from the authorities.

Date for Israeli Redeployment Called 'Binding'

NC1406140695 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1140 GMT 14 Jun 95

[Commentary by 'Atif 'Umar: "1 July Is a Binding Date, Not Just a Target"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Recent Israeli statements that 1 July, the date set for the redeployment of Israeli forces in the West Bank and Gaza, is just a target date constitute one of the new obstacles to a comprehensive Middle East peace. The date was set after contacts, consultations, and discussions among all the political leaders concerned with achieving the hoped-for peace between the Arabs and Israel. And it is hard not to think that marking this date as the beginning of new practical steps to advance the peace process was one of the objectives of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's recent tour of the region. After all, the process long stood still because of various obstacles,

Respecting the date, 1 July, which, anyway, comes several months after the date set in the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles, will help the Palestinian people assume their responsibilities and enable those who will be elected to exercise their rights of controlling the domestic situation, which is experiencing violent shocks and difficult confrontations. Perhaps the violence that surfaces occasionally is one of the features of the absence of a genuine authority. We cannot expect an end to this violence unless things are done correctly and the Palestinian people elect the representatives who will run their affairs and plan their security and a new future, in which all parties can cooperate to achieve peace and stability in an area that lacked peace for about 50 years.

Respecting 1 July, the date set for expanding Palestinian self rule, will demonstrate to the opponents of peace, especially on the Palestinian side, that every clause in the agreement signed between Israel and the Palestinian Authority will be implemented as scheduled. It will show them that if some obstacles prevented particular clauses from being implemented, it does not mean Israel retracted from the agreement, and the two sides are trying to achieve the best results in their continuing negotiations.

Although we trust that the negotiations between the Palestinians and the Israelis are moving toward their objective, we warn against going too far in the attempts to obstruct or circumvent that objective. The economic hardship experienced by the Palestinian people is increasing daily because of the starvation war imposed on them. Palestinians lose their temper and resort to counterviolence when Jewish settlers carry out provocative acts and persist in using terrorism against Palestinians in the occupied territories. Angry Palestinian reaction goes beyond the limit sometimes. This is where the war of starvation starts, with its direct negative repercussions on the peace process.

Proceeding from this, the political leadership in Egypt intensified its contacts with various leaders to get them to play an effective role in convincing the Israeli side to respect its obligations and agreements with the Palestinians so that the peace process can be pushed ahead. The Palestine issue will remain the crux of the Middle East conflict. When it finds an acceptable solution based on international resolutions and the land-for-peace principle, the conflicts between Israel and the other Arab countries will find their way toward a solution. The announcement that the Syrian and Israeli chiefs of staff will meet in Washington soon causes further optimism that a comprehensive Mideast peace is near.

That Israel respects its obligations and will not retreat from them or bargain over them is extremely important if it really intends to achieve a comprehensive peace with all the Arabs from the Gulf to the ocean. We

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believe this has been the dream of the Israeli leaders for around 50 years. When the chance comes for this dream to be realized, history will have no mercy on those who waste it, no matter the excuses or justifications.

Article Assesses Consultative Council Election

95LD0067a Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic 28 Apr 95 p 13

[Article by Nabil Rashwan]

[FBIS Translated Text] While most parties are preparing to participate in the coming midterm Consultative Council elections to be held on Wednesday, 7 June, observers are watching for these elections that come amidst a number of important political and partisan changes. Most important among these changes is the fact that this is the first Consultative Council elections to be held since the holding last June of the National Dialogue Conference, which represented all political and partisan powers. This is also the first Consultative Council elections since changes in the Political Rights Law were undertaken and since allowing new voters' registration for a period of three months (November through January), which made it possible for 1.4 million citizens to register in the electoral list. Another change is that repeated names and names of deceased persons have been eliminated from the electoral list.

During the National Dialogue Conference, parties and political powers have agreed to expand the Consultative Council's powers with regards to draft bills. Parties have also demanded that the budget general framework be subjected to the same procedure that the plan framework is subjected to; i.e., it be presented to the Consultative Council before it is discussed in the People's Assembly.

Chief Judge Ahmad Fathi Mursi, chairman of the Legislative and Constitutional Consultative Council Committee, made it clear that the latest change in the Consultative Council law has added new constituencies and made compositional changes in others. Two new constituencies, one in Alexandria Governorate, with its center at al-Dikhaylah Police Station, and the other in al-Minufiyah Governorate, with its center at Minuf Police Station have been added to the existing 86 constituencies bringing the total number of constituencies to 88. Besides, constituency composition in al-Sharqiyah, al-Daqahliyah, al-Buhayrah, and al-Jizah Governorates has undergone certain changes.

Chief Judge Ahmad Fathi declared that these constituency changes will take effect during the coming midterm Consultative Council elections; consequently, the number of appointed members will increase to 88 and that of total members to 264.

Midterm elections will involve 129 Consultative Council members, 86 of whom will be elected and 43 appointed. When the new constituencies are added, the number of appointed members in the midterm elections will increase to 45 and that of members elected through general secret direct ballot to 90. The law stipulates that at least 50 percent of the Consultative Council members should be workers and peasants.

Following are names of some of the most prominent Consultative Council members whose membership ends and who would be either reappointed or nominated to run for election during the forthcoming elections scheduled for next month. In fact, preparations for the elections are already under way inside the political parties and in city and village streets where posters carrying names, programs, and orientations of those running for election are being posted.... The prominent names are those of: Dr. 'Atif Sidqi, the prime minister (appointed), Safwat al-Sharif, minister of information (appointed), Ahmad al-'Amawi, minister of manpower and employment (elected), Tharwat Abazah, the Consultative Council deputy speaker (appointed),and Ibrahim Nafi', Makram Muhammad Ahmad, Samir Rajab, and Dr. 'Abd-al-'Azim Ramadan, all of whom are appointed.

The membership of the following names also ends: Major General Zaki Badr, former minister of interior (appointed), Dr. Ahmad Salamah, former minister of state for People's Assembly and Consultative Council affairs (appointed), Dr. 'Adel 'Izz, former minister of state for scientific research (appointed), Yusuf Sabri Abu-Talib, former minister of defense (appointed), Ahmad Nuh, former minister of supply and internal trade (appointed), Dr. Fathi Muhammad 'Ali, former minister of education (appointed), Dr. Mahmud Mahfuz, former minister of health (appointed), and Dr. Khayri al-Samrah, former dean of the Kasr al-'Aini faculty of medicine (appointed).

Furthermore, the membership of the following members of the Consultative Council will end: Muhammad Farid Khamis, president of the Egyptian Federation of Industries, Dr. Zaynab al-Subki, Karimah al-'Arusi, Dr. Samiah al-Jindi, 'A'ishah 'Abd-al-Hadi, Zaki Malik, Dr. Makram Jum'a, director of Um al-Masriyeen Hospital, Dr. Hamdi al-Hakim, former governor of al-Fayyum, Engineer Husayn 'Uthman and Muhammad Murad al-Sibtasi....

The terms of Dr. Mustafah Kamal Hilmi, speaker of the Council and the two vice speakers will also end with the end of the current session. The 16th regular session of the Consultative Council is scheduled to hold its first meeting on 4 June 1995 [date as published].

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Observers find that the most significant Council's tradition is that it is the only council in Egypt where it has been agreed that there should be no cheering for anyone or any thing. This tradition conveys an atmosphere of reverence and tranquility to the Council, making its atmosphere similar to that prevalent in houses of senates.

The Council also discusses almost all national issues. Developing its responsibility and expanding its powers, which the constitution has defined, are issues that have been discussed in the Council more than once. The Council's recommendations have been the following: The Council should be consulted with regards to propositions for making constitutional changes, propositions for complementing the constitution, the plan project, the budget project, truce and alliance treaties and all matters that the president refers to it. This means that the Council is more like consultative councils than it is like representative councils that have legislation and monitoring rights.

The agreement between all political parties, powers, and unions attending the conference about increasing the powers of the present Council in the framework of the constitution has been one of the most significant results of the June-July 1994 National Dialogue Conference. This means that the Council's responsibility would be more representative of the constitutional quotation in its totality when it reads: "the Council is concerned with all issues and draft bills that the President refers to it...." A case in point did occur during the current session, which is about to end, when the president referred to the Council a draft bill to issue long-term bonds to the value of 10 billion Egyptian pounds. The Council discussed this issue and recommended that the value of the bonds be increased to 15 billion pounds; the matter was then referred to the People's Assembly and ratified by it. Government officials have also announced that it is expected, after political parties have discussed the first stage of the draft housing bill, that it be referred to the Consultative Council. This is considered the beginning of a new stage in the development of the Council's powers and work; the Council would be thus playing a more active role in the legislation process; the Council has a vast experience and a profound manner of conducting studies and discussions.

Dr. Subhi 'Abd-al-Hakim, the first speaker of the Consultative Council (1980-86), says that: "after functioning for this number of years, the Council has been proven to be efficient and has played its role very well. Consequently, we believe we should develop it and expand its powers in order for it to become more like a house of senates...." Dr. Subhi also made it clear that when the Consultative Council was established in the eighties, it faced much opposition from members of the People's Assembly who resisted the establishment of a second representative council. Consequently, at that time, the Consultative Council was established with limited powers.

Because the current year could be labeled the year of the general elections, all parties, political powers, and independents are preparing for filing their papers for participating in these coming elections. As the law prohibits combining membership of the Consultative Council and the People's Assembly, during the coming few days, there will be a lot of partisan and political maneuvering in order to transfer some Council members to the People's Assembly, which is still considered the representative council with full powers. However, because of the timing of the elections, it is decided that the Consultative Council elections be conducted first, meaning that the political parties should meticulously decide upon their candidates for both councils.

Except for the New Wafd Party, all other political parties will participate in the Consultative Council's elections as this participation is regarded as a kind of preparation for the big battle: that of participating in the People's Assembly's elections during the coming summer. Yasin Siraj-al-Din, member of the New Wafd Party's high committee says that: "we do not believe in the Consultative Council because it has no legislative powers, neither in legislation nor in monitoring, thus it is more like consultative and research councils."

Though some share Siraj-al-Din's view of the Consultative Council, the opposition parties believe that, during the past years, it played its role in a manner that made everyone admire it.

Observers expect the coming weeks to witness an election battle between Al-Watani, the opposition and independent—of all inclinations—candidates in order to win seats in the Consultative Council, which is scheduled to have its first session after the midterm elections on the coming 4 June [date as published].

Manpower Minister Discusses Labor Force

95LD0065A Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic 28 Apr 95 pp 28-33

[Interview with Manpower Minister Ahmad al-'Amawi by Hamdi Rizq; place and date not given; from the "Interview of the Week" feature — first two paragraphs are AL-MUSAWWAR introduction]

[FBIS Translated Text] Minister Ahmad al-'Amawi knows a lot of what goes on inside Egypt's workers and what goes on in the labor movement lobbies. The man started his life in a workers' factory hall, wearing the blue uniform. This is what made him eligible to

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become chairman of the Egyptian Workers Federation and then minister of manpower. Because the man carries on his shoulders the concerns of more than 16 million workers inside and outside Egypt and because the labor market at home and abroad is unstable now and subject to frequent fluctuation, we have had this interview with him, which lasted a full four hours.

The AL-MUSAWWAR interview was after the minister's Gulf tour in which he familiarized himself on the spot with the concerns of Egyptian workers there. He also negotiated with officials to resolve numerous problems that these workers encounter. In Saudi Arabia, it was agreed to establish controls to govern the guarantor system and to eliminate many of the acts of deception to which our workers are exposed there. The interview moved from expatriate workers to privatization, the unified labor law, workers' future, unemployment, graduates awaiting a letter from the minister of manpower, and numerous other issues.

[Rizq] To begin, we would like to be familiarized with the labor map and with the size of Egypt's manpower.

[Al-'Amawi] Egypt's manpower has exceeded 16.3 million workers, of whom nearly 4.5 millions are government workers and employees and 4.1 million are business-sector workers. The public sector, which includes military factories, banks, and other institutions, employs 150,000-200,000 workers. The regulated private sector (which includes companies or corporations that employ more than 50 workers each) employs nearly 2 million workers. The unregulated public [private] sector, which includes agricultural workers and others, employs the rest of this manpower.

[Rizq] What is the women's share of Egypt's manpower?

[Al-'Amawi] Women amount to nearly 20 percent of this manpower. If we include rural women who participate in unregulated labor and who are not considered by many as a work force even though they constitute a main force, especially with the departure of male workers and farmers to the oil country—if we calculate this force, then women amount to 30 percent the work force.

[Rizq] From time to time, studies surface to talk about the amazing decline in the Egyptian worker's productivity. One study has gone as far as saying that this productivity amounts to 27 minutes per day per worker. How do you view this issue?

[Al-'Amawi] We cannot calculate the worker's productivity generally. We can talk about each sector's productivity. One cannot, for example, calculate the government sector's productivity whereas one can calculate productivity in the areas of trade, banking, and in economic organizations. At times, a worker's productivity is higher than in any sector, depending on the sector to which he belongs.

What concerns us here is the industrial sector's productivity. If we calculate this productivity, we will also find that there is a difference between the various segments of this sector, as in the case of the difference between textile, petroleum, engineering industry workers and others. In some segments, productivity is low for historical reasons.

[Rizq] For example?

[Al-'Amawi] The textile segment because it is a labor-intensive segment and because its technology is not sophisticated, even though some companies have embarked on modernization.

[Rizq] By what criterion are you measuring?

[Al-'Amawi] By the criterion of the sector itself. For example, productivity in the textile segment amounts to 10,000 [no units given]. In the drug segment, the worker's productivity amounts to 70,000-100,000 annually. In the petroleum segment, it is high and it may reach one million.

[Rizq] What is the general picture of the worker's productivity?

[Al-'Amawi] Productivity measures a worker's desire to work. It can be said that the Egyptian worker's desire is very high. He is energetic and not lazy. Therefore, in well-organized companies that have well-trained workers, high technology, and vigilant management, the Egyptian worker's productivity is equal to that of his counterpart in Japan, for example. In companies that have backward management and technology, the worker's productivity drops.

[Rizq] But the rate of malingering and absenteeism is very high?

[Al-'Amawi] This was the case until 1980. But, with the presence of a management that has tied wage to production, these phenomena disappeared. The problems we are experiencing now are the problems of management and financing, which influence performance of the units. Some companies resort to overdraft, and these companies need to correct their financial structures by eliminating their debts, modernizing some of their production lines, and securing markets.

Inverse Pyramid

[Rizq] The Egyptian work force is very much like an inverse pyramid: a base comprised of ordinary workers, a top comprised of university graduates, and a

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strangulated middle comprised of trained and qualified labor. Is this flaw still present?

[Al-'Amawi] Some among us still see skilled labor as the labor graduated from technical schools. This is not the real skilled labor, and it may disappear someday because the capabilities and curricula of its schools are very modest. We need labor trained practically in above middle-level or high institutes. It is true that we in the Ministry of Manpower have a role in training. However, this role is not supposed to be performed by governments. This is the task of companies and corporations. A skilled worker receives high-level education in the advanced countries.

[Rizq] Egyptian labor abroad faces competition from Asian labor. Some believe that this Asian labor is better trained. How true is this?

[Al-'Amawi] This is absolutely untrue. We have high-value Egyptian labor, embodied in teachers, physicians, and engineers. These form nearly 50 percent of the entire Egyptian manpower. In Saudi Arabia, we have nearly 1.2 million workers, half of whom are teachers, doctors, and highly trained groups. We have relative advantages in these professions, such as Egyptian education and the unity of language, feelings, nationality, and faith. In technical areas where the language is not used and nationalism is not involved, there is strong competition. The market there is on its way to absorbing citizens of these [Asian] countries in areas in which they excel. As for technical fields, Egyptian labor must be trained to compete in these fields.

[Rizq] How about hotel and health workers?

[Al-'Amawi] We still lack a lot in this regard. Our hotel graduates and our nurses do not have command of a foreign language. The market requires a foreign language in these two particular areas. Another field in which we will not be able to compete is the field of domestics and nursemaids.

[Rizq] Why?

[Al-'Amawi] This type of labor requires certain traditions and values that are found in Asian labor. Our traditions don't agree with these vocations, and our workers will not perform them the way Asian women workers do. Moreover, we will not be able to control this type of labor.

[Rizq] What is the percentage of Egyptian labor in the Gulf countries?

[Al-'Amawi] It is higher than any other nationality.

[Rizq] Even though Asian labor is more highly qualified?

[Al-'Amawi] It is not true that Asian labor is more highly qualified. Only Filipino labor is more highly qualified because a high educational and training system exists in the Philippines. Egyptian labor is more highly qualified and commands higher wages than any other labor.

[Rizq] Is it true that demand for Egyptian labor has been decreasing?

[Al-'Amawi] A total of 154,000 workers went to the Gulf states in 1994.

[Rizq] How many expatriate workers are there?

[Al-'Amawi] We have more than 3 million workers in the Gulf and other countries.

[Rizq] It seems that this figure is smaller than it used to be?

[Al-'Amawi] The number of workers in Libya has dropped somewhat, and their number in Jordan is in a state of flux because Jordan is experiencing unemployment.

[Rizq] In what country is the biggest number concentrated?

[Al-'Amawi] We have 1-1.1 million workers in Saudi Arabia, and they work in various professions.

[Rizq] And other than Saudi Arabia?

[Al-'Amawi] We have nearly 600,000 workers in Libya.

[Rizq] And next to Libya?

[Al-'Amawi] There are nearly 280,000 workers in Jordan.

[Rizq] And after Jordan?

[Al-'Amawi] We have nearly 200,000 workers in Kuwait; 80,000 in the United Arab Emirates; nearly 40,000 in Qatar; a smaller number in Bahrain; and a small number in Yemen.

Iraq

[Rizq] What about Iraq?

[Al-'Amawi] We have no workers in Iraq because work is not available to the Iraqis themselves now. But there are Egyptian residents there, and they are tied to Iraqi families. They have married, and they have property and ties there.

[Rizq] What is the number of these residents.

[Al-'Amawi] The figure ranges from 50,000-80,000.

[Rizq] What is the sum still owed our workers in Iraq?

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[Al-'Amawi] They are owed $491 million.

[Rizq] According to what estimates?

[Al-'Amawi] They are not estimates but actual figures compiled from the workers' unpaid remittances.

[Rizq] And what is the reparations figure?

[Al-'Amawi] Nearly $950 million.

[Rizq] How have they been estimated?

[Al-'Amawi] On the basis of forms submitted by the victims.

[Rizq] What is the fate of the remittances?

[Al-'Amawi] They will be paid in full when the blockade against Iraq is lifted. Iraq itself has not denied these dues.

[Rizq] And what about reparations?

[Al-'Amawi] From the UN fund. They have reviewed the first payment, which amounts to $62 million, and have acknowledged it. They are now reviewing a payment that amounts to $90 million, and this will be paid by the United Nations. What I mean is that it will be paid from Iraqi money collected by the United Nations from Iraq.

[Rizq] Is there Egyptian-Iraqi dialogue on this issue now?

[Al-'Amawi] No. What are we going to discuss? Iraq itself has not denied these rights and has displayed goodwill in this regard.

Flying Coffins

[Rizq] There have been conflicting reports on coffins bringing Egyptians from Iraq. Are Egyptians actually targeted there?

[Al-'Amawi] Coffins have come from Iraq and from Jordan, and not just from Iraq. At one time during the Iraq-Iran war, there were Egyptian volunteers in the Iraqi Army, and some of them became casualties of that war. This is what was behind the coffins phenomenon. I was chairman of the Egyptian Workers Federation at the time, and we discussed this issue. I do not think that there was anything plotted against Egyptians. There have been ordinary individual incidents between Egyptians and Iraqis, and at times between Egyptians themselves.

[Rizq] Has a fact-finding committee investigated this issue?

[Al-'Amawi] In 1994, the coffins came from Jordan. There were a total of 148 deaths, 48 of them as a result of road accidents. Traffic on Jordanian roads is speedy. The deaths also included five executions carried out in accordance with court decisions. In three of these cases, Egyptians killed Egyptians. The rest were ordinary deaths, such as electrocution resulting from the fact that untrained Egyptian workers worked in the electrical field. The figure, i.e., 158 [as published] cases, is an ordinary figure when compared with 280,000 workers, in addition to nearly 40,000 residents living in Jordan.

[Rizq] What is this immense number doing in Jordan?

[Al-'Amawi] They work in agriculture, mostly without permits. The authorities there treat them leniently and help us in this regard. They just ask the workers to get work permits.

[Rizq] What is the Egyptian worker's salary in Jordan?

[Al-'Amawi] Agricultural workers work on the basis of sharecropping. A farm owner turns over his farm to the worker to cultivate and manage it in return for a certain share of the crop. This is beneficial to both parties.

Israel

[Rizq] Is there Egyptian labor in Israel?

[Al-'Amawi] I have no knowledge of anything of the sort. To my knowledge, there is no Egyptian labor in Israel. I cannot imagine such a thing because Palestinian labor is available there. No Egyptian has applied for a permit to work in Israel.

[Rizq] Is there no Israeli labor in Egypt?

[Al-'Amawi] It is possible that there are agricultural experts.

[Rizq] Is Egyptian labor in Kuwait owed any arrears?

[Al-'Amawi] Iraq is responsible for the reparations to those who were in Kuwait and who were harmed by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. These people's [illegible] are a part of the $950 million in reparations that Iraq owes us.

[Rizq] It has been reported that Egyptian labor in Jordan has been subjected to some arbitrary measures, such as expulsion and deportation. Has this been done within a legal framework, and what is your position as a ministry?

[Al-'Amawi] I have no confirmed information that such things have taken place. It is possible that they have. However, we must remember well that any Egyptian citizen who enters Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, or other countries without legal justification exposes himself to pursuit. Some imagine that they can enter Saudi Arabia on a minor pilgrimage visa or that

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they can go to Jordan as visitors and stay there. In such cases, they will be exposed to legal measures, and we can do nothing for them. My role as a minister is to protect whoever has gone there within a legitimate and legal framework.

[Rizq] But this way, you ignore the fact that the Egyptian worker is victimized by fraudulent and deceitful activities that persuade him to go abroad to seek employment.

[Al-'Amawi] It is true that the worker is deceived and that as a result of this deception, he makes the mistake of staying illegally in those countries. This is another issue. The government is innocent of both cases.

[Rizq] But should the government not intervene to examine the causes of this fraud and take a position against it?

[Al-'Amawi] This is what concerns us now. We are examining the legal gaps that allow our workers to be deceived. It has become evident to us that certain individuals obtain a permit from certain parties in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to bring in workers from abroad. These individuals recruit the permitted number and go to Saudi Arabia without securing enough work opportunities for the number of workers they were permitted to introduce into the country legally. Consequently, the individual concerned turns over the excess workers to work with a "guarantor" or another business owner in violation of the Saudi law. He may also let the workers work for a "guarantor" in return for a certain percentage of their wages. This, too, is in violation of the Saudi law.

Saudi Guarantor

[Rizq] Didn't you discuss the issue of the "guarantor" with the Saudi Government during your latest tour?

[Al-'Amawi] It was agreed with the Saudi side to fill the gaps in the Saudi law. The kingdom has given workers who entered the country illegally or who were deceived a grace period of six months to settle their status. The government has amended the guarantee procedures so they will cover the actual business owner there. If a worker cannot settle his status, then he must return. Whoever is seized after the deadline will be deported, and the business owner employing him will be fined 100,000 riyals and jailed for six months.

[Rizq] Are there no controls in the Saudi law to stop people who import labor without the presence of a real need for it?

[Al-'Amawi] People with serious businesses in the kingdom respect legal methods. On its part, the Saudi Ministry of Labor will send inspectors to establishments that apply to import labor so as to make sure the applications are serious and to determine an adequate number of workers for the applicants.

[Rizq] Are East Asia workers subjected to the same kind of deception as Egyptian workers?

[Al-'Amawi] There are labor-importing agencies in the kingdom that operate legally and bring East Asian workers. I was surprised to find that these agencies are prevented from operating in Egypt.

[Rizq] Who has prevented them?

[Al-'Amawi] Regrettably, some Egyptian circles believed that if these agencies came to Egypt, they would agree with Egyptian employment companies and exploit Egyptian workers. Thus, we prevented agencies operating under the control of the law and of the Saudi Labor Ministry and threw the door wide open for visa middlemen and merchants. As a result, an Egyptian consul in the kingdom has been searching to find a Saudi citizen who imported a number of Egyptian workers. The workers have not found employment, and they want to return home. But the Saudi citizen has kept their passports and disappeared.

[Rizq] Has the Saudi Government agreed that labor will be imported through these agencies only?

[Al-'Amawi] The government is not responsible for this aspect. Recently, the government agreed with the Riyadh, Jeddah, and Medina Chambers of Commerce and with labor-importing companies to deal with and look for labor without middlemen. After the al-'Adha holiday, a delegation from these chambers will visit Egypt to meet at the Egyptian Ministry of Manpower with Egyptian employment companies to agree on a model employment contract under the ministry's supervision.

[Rizq] What is the number of workers expected to settle their status in the kingdom within the six-month period?

[Al-'Amawi] The violations are small in number, and I don't expect their number to exceed 50,000 workers.

[Rizq] The guarantor has absolute rights over the worker whose humanity is nearly nullified. Didn't you discuss this aspect with the Saudi side?

[Al-'Amawi] In the Saudi law, the guarantor system is a system that prevents competition that harms the business owner and works in the worker's interest. This is so the worker will not be given the right to move from employer to employer. This system is enacted in all the Gulf states. It is an internal affair and an internal law. We have no right to discuss it with them or to demand its suspension.

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[Rizq] If this is a general system whose suspension we are not entitled to demand, then at least we should demand that it be corrected.

[Al-'Amawi] It is possible, of course. We can resort to the judiciary if there are cases that swerve from the general law. At times, we find that both the Egyptian side and the Saudi side agree on a faulty contract to circumvent something.

[Rizq] You mean that the Egyptian side squanders its rights and is negligent when it concludes contracts with the Saudi side?

[Al-'Amawi] This is what happens. Generally, the violations are limited in number when measured against the nearly 1.2 million Egyptian workers in the kingdom.

[Rizq] Does the ministry set a minimum wage for those who go to work abroad?

[Al-'Amawi] It is a question of supply and demand. The labor market is governed by economic mechanisms. We cannot impose a minimum wage on Saudi Arabia or others. However, we have established a minimum as a reference point for those who go to work abroad. We have established this minimum by examining the living conditions in every country. We have not required those who go to work abroad to conclude their contracts accordingly. Despite this, we were accused at the People's Assembly of putting obstacles in the face of labor departure. Consequently, we were compelled to reduce the minimum by 20 percent.

[Rizq] But the cost of living has risen in the Gulf states. You should have raised the minimum wages.

[Al-'Amawi] This is true. But, in view of the economic conditions, workers accept reduced wages. What has motivated a large number of Asian workers to depart the Gulf is that their wages are low in the first place. With the reduction, they could no longer save any money. Some Egyptian workers conclude contracts that pay less than the minimal wage. This is their personal option.

One-Half Million

[Rizq] We have talked a lot about labor in Saudi Arabia. What about the other countries?

[Al-'Amawi] What applies to Saudi Arabia applies to all countries that demand an advance visa. There are open countries that do not demand a visa, such as Jordan and Libya. However, it has been agreed with Jordan that whoever goes there must have an entry visa and a return ticket so we will guarantee the worker's return if his circumstances there get bad.

[Rizq] What about the Egyptians' problems in Libya? What is their number there?

[Al-'Amawi] Their number ranges from 500,000-600,000 workers. They include contract teachers and doctors who go there with the approval of the ministries of education and health. A large number of them work in agriculture and go there on a personal contract. These contracts are concluded via the Egyptian Manpower Ministry.

[Rizq] Does everybody who goes there pass through the Egyptian Manpower Ministry?

[Al-'Amawi] No. There are those who go without a visa or a contract. Those do not go through us. But, if any of them encounters a problem, he can resort to the Egyptian Embassy's labor office.

[Rizq] There is a complaint that Egyptian embassies and consulates abroad don't protect our workers adequately.

[Al-'Amawi] The current generation of Egyptian diplomats are not the sons of princes or consuls, and they exert mammoth efforts. But let us be frank. Many Egyptians do not preserve their rights. Any Egyptian who goes abroad should register his name, his address, and his work place with the consulate so that if any emergency develops, the consulate people can go to him. But nobody does this, not even intellectuals and educated people who are abroad. As a result, we do not know the exact number of Egyptians in every city abroad. The rights of many of them are lost, and nobody hears about them.

War of Maids

[Rizq] An almost real war erupted between the Philippines and Singapore over the rights of a "maid" whereas we find that the rights of some Egyptians abroad are wasted. A worker may be wrong not to register the details concerning him at the embassy. But, even when they are registered, the worker finds nobody to get his right for him.

[Al-'Amawi] I disagree with you on this. Before I became minister, I visited a number of our offices abroad and I saw how Egyptian diplomats there work to protect the workers' right.

[Rizq] And what do you say to the case in which a Kuwaiti gouged out the an Egyptian physician's eye?

[Al-'Amawi] And what happened to that Kuwaiti? He was tried and punished firmly. I have read in the Egyptian press thank you letters addressed to the Kuwaiti Government regarding this incident. However, let us be frank. There are those in the Gulf states who treat workers arbitrarily and who try to void their rights. But do not some business owners do this in Egypt? What I am saying is that such cases are not a general rule

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but rather sporadic cases that occur inside and outside Egypt.

[Rizq] Don't you feel that there are tendencies in the Gulf states to exclude, or at least reduce, Egyptian labor there?

[Al-'Amawi] No, I have not felt that there are such tendencies toward Egyptian labor in particular. However, there is a governmental tendency to reduce foreign labor generally. As for the private sector, it is governed by the market mechanisms.

[Rizq] Doesn't this require the Ministry of Manpower to develop a new strategy to solve this problem?

[Al-'Amawi] This takes us back to what I said previously about the need to train the Egyptian worker in a manner that befits the market mechanisms.

Higher Than Canal

[Rizq] In your estimate, what is the volume of the revenues from Egyptian expatriate labor?

[Al-'Amawi] This is not my estimate but a definite figure. According to last year's report by the Central Accounting Agency, these revenues amounted to $7.1 billion, including $2 billion in in-kind remittances, such as appliances, clothes, and so forth. This revenue exceeds revenues from the Suez Canal and tourism.

[Rizq] Do you expect remittances to stop at this limit, to increase, or to decrease?

[Al-'Amawi] It is possible the figure will fluctuate, rising or falling slightly this year and next year because of market circumstances.

[Rizq] We notice that those returning from Libya are increasing in number. Does this have any connection with the Libyan foreign minister's statement that the Libyan Government will deport all foreign labor within three months?

[Al-'Amawi] The foreign minister's statement concerns foreign labor. An Egyptian worker resides their on a personal identity card, and he is entitled to enter the country without a visa. Therefore, I don't imagine that this statement applies to Egyptians.

[Rizq] What does the latest report on your desk say about our labor in Libya?

[Al-'Amawi] The latest report confirms that Egyptian labor will not be affected by this decision. The only existing problems are ordinary problems, such as remittances and arrears in salaries.

[Rizq] What part of his income in the Jamahiriyah can an Egyptian remit to Egypt?

[Al-'Amawi] Those working on an official contract can remit 50 percent of their entire income. As for noncontract workers, the remittances vary.

[Rizq] Isn't it somewhat arbitrary to require that the Egyptian worker remit no more than 50 percent of his income?

[Al-'Amawi] These are the Libyan laws.

[Rizq] We feel that some countries have begun to deal with the entry of Egyptians arbitrarily and have begun to demand health certificates confirming that they are free of the "C" virus. Why haven't you raised this issue with them?

[Al-'Amawi] The party that raised the "C" virus issue is a prominent Egyptian physician who has said that 70 percent of the Egyptians are infected with the "C" virus. Yet, we blame others because they demand a health certificate!

[Rizq] Isn't it strange that we have foreign labor while we export our labor to the outside world?

[Al-'Amawi] The foreign labor we have is within the narrowest limits and has scarce specializations. Egyptian law stipulates that foreign labor must not exceed 10 percent the labor in any site. The areas where we have concentrated foreign labor are the areas of oil production and, at times, technological agriculture.

Kafr al-Dawwar

[Rizq] Let us move to labor conditions in Egypt. We say that this year has seen anxiety in some Egyptian work sites, as in the cases of Kafr al-Dawwar, al-Mahallah, and the iron and steel industry. Why these particular sites?

[Al-'Amawi] On the basis of my labor experience, this anxiety is normal. We are supposed to have daily problems. As for the mass problems to which you have referred, they are the result of an approaching labor election date. We experience this every three or four years. Some elements, whether opposing or supporting, always move, issue leaflets, and criticize the existing organization, even if it is the most energetic. They include in their leaflets all kinds of demands, no matter what they are. This is what has happened in the sites that have experienced anxiety. Matters there have not gone beyond the issuance of some leaflets and the convocation of some meetings. We must know that those who lose in elections are manifold those who win. In al-Mahallah, for example, there were 360 candidates, of whom only 21 won. The rest continue to criticize and to issue leaflets throughout the election cycle in preparation for the next election.

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We have gotten together with the union organization, which is the workers representatives, to find out the workers' problems. We found that things are very normal. They have some demands. What is important here is how to meet these demands. Here, we are faced with a difficulty. The problem we have now is how to enable all our units to stand on their own feet, especially when a unit is saddled with debts and when it has no liquidity. Some units contact us monthly because they cannot pay their workers' wages. In this case, we contact the ministry concerned, the holding company, or a certain party. The wages are disbursed so the company [unit] will not dispense with a single worker.

[Rizq] What is the worker's average income in the business sector?

[Al-'Amawi] Income varies from unit to unit and from sector to sector. In the textile sector, the income is 4,000 pounds annually; in the chemicals sector, 9,000-12,000 annually; in the engineering industries, 6,000-7,000; in mining and ceramics, 7,000-9,000. This average income includes fixed wages, social insurance, incentives, and in-kind benefits, such as medical care, meals, and other benefits.

There are examples of companies in a bad position, such as the Hulwan Egyptian Textile Company, which cannot secure wages for its workers.

Political Demands

[Rizq] In a certain period, labor units were burdened with demands that were more political in nature than they were labor demands. Also, workers were treated as a political force. Consequently, unsound labor relations developed, and those units were saddled with increased burdens.

[Al-'Amawi] To reform the units, it is required that these units rid themselves of their historical burdens and that all forces unite to secure the financing necessary to support these units in one way or another.

[Rizq] Are there units that are impossible to reform?

[Al-'Amawi] Fortunately, there are only 10 such units, and their total work force amounts to 10,000-15,000 workers. So, we are not faced with labor anxiety.

[Rizq] There are those who think that the first step to reform the labor laws is to reduce the tasks of labor representation to whatever pertains to labor services only; that the principle of reward and punishment should be enacted; and that it should be permitted to punish those who err and to reward those who excel. What happens now is that labor union committees stand with the worker, regardless whether he is wrong, guilty, or innocent.

[Al-'Amawi] This is true, but not in all cases. The problem is not in the word of the law but in the procedures, which incorporate many weaknesses. These weaknesses are being corrected, and the gaps are being filled. All this will be included in the unified labor law, which we have finished drafting. We have developed solutions to all the current weaknesses.

[Rizq] Will the new law permit worker "dismissal?"

[Al-'Amawi] There is no law in the world that permits a worker's dismissal without a reason. If the dismissal is arbitrary, the worker is compensated. I will say at my own responsibility that, when promulgated, the unified labor law will be the best labor law seen by Egypt.

[Rizq] Has the law been amended through your position as a government middleman or as a middleman between workers and business owners?

[Al-'Amawi] Here is a word of truth. I started thinking of the law when I was the Egyptian Workers Federation chairman. The current law does not permit the labor representative to deal freely with the business owner and does not give the labor representative the powers to deal with the business owner. This is proven by the fact that there are general union chairmen who ask me to meet with business owners to discuss labor problems with them. This is why I gave consideration to the thought that Egypt's labor laws must be amended so they will take future developments in the Egyptian society into consideration. I have talked to the International Labor Organization and to Dr. Ahmad al-Bura'i, an Egyptian expert. So, as a union man and before I learned I was going to be a minister, I and all labor leaders developed a strong wish to amend the labor law.

We are not amending the labor law in the interest of one party and to the detriment of another. We have had to establish the eyelash-wide lines separating the rights and duties of each side.

New Law

[Rizq] What does the law being drafted contain about negotiations between labor and business owners?

[Al-'Amawi] Every three years, labor union representatives in every corporation will sit down with business owners to renew contracts. This means that consideration will be given to raising or reducing wages according to decisions made by a wages and prices committee, which will meet every three years. This committee, which is headed by the planning minister, will meet every three years to evaluate the economy and to issue decrees regulating wages and prices.

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[Rizq] What are the bounds of the new amendments regulating the rights of the two sides—labor and business owner—on the issue of dismissal specifically?

[Al-'Amawi] Article 62 in the draft law defines dismissal cases. The final decision in this regard is left up to a judiciary committee, with the preliminary decision made within no more than 15 days [as of the date of dismissal] and the final decision within three months. The dispute has to be settled. The committee includes two magistrates, the business owner, the worker, and a union representative. As in the case of the three-party committee, the decision must be implemented. However, it is permitted to appeal this decision to a second-level [administrative] court. In the old text, the period to settle the dispute could extend up to five years.

We must not talk of dismissal as if it were the general rule. I should note here that the three-party committee (in one of Alexandria's district) approved dismissal in nearly 82 percent of the cases. The new condition is likely to curb this particular aspect.

[Rizq] What place do strikes and shutouts take in the new provisions?

[Al-'Amawi] A strike is stipulated as a right that the worker exercises through his union, with the approval of the general union. A shutout is a measure that the business owner takes through a special committee formed to examine this measure. This committee is formed of the ministries of labor, social insurance, and arbiters. It meets to examine the reasons for the shutout. If it finds that they are real, it can permit a total or partial shutout or it can reject it. A shutout is not an absolute right.

[Rizq] What about striking without the general union's approval?

[Al-'Amawi] It makes dismissal a must.

[Rizq] Why?

[Al-'Amawi] A strike suspends, but does not nullify, a contract until this strike ends. The general union pays wages during the strike out of its fund. In Europe, unions have found that strikes can be endless. Their funds have gone ,bankrupt and their membership has declined. Today, strikers in Europe go unpaid. A glaring example is the British mineworkers strike during Thatcher's government. The mines were unable to carry on, and they are still closed.

[Rizq] Does the law require the unions to establish such funds?

[Al-'Amawi] The general union is not required to set up a strike fund. It is well known that fund money is paid by workers out of the desire to get money at times of strike. When the worker becomes convinced that a strike will produce no revenue, he will not strike.

[Rizq] Are strikes permitted in all utilities and activities?

[Al-'Amawi] No. Strikes will be prohibited at sites on which the prime minister issues a decree, such as the sewerage utility, electricity, and ambulance services; i.e., strikes will be prevented where the consequences cannot be obviated. If ambulance workers strike and if, as a result, a number of patients die, then this consequence cannot be obviated. Such prohibitions occur all over the world. It is well known that Reagan dismissed 18,000 air controllers on his first day as a president because they went on strike when they were prevented from striking.

We in Egypt learned from the experiences of others when we drafted the labor law.

Wages

[Rizq] What about wages? Can they be reduced, for example?

[Al-'Amawi] Wages cannot be reduced. The minimum on which workers and business owners can negotiate are current wages and benefits. In this case, we give each unit the opportunity to move [independently]. A unit that has a surplus can increase wages on labor pressure and a unit that does not have a surplus says that what it is paying is enough. Regarding the periodic annual allowance, it cannot be less than 7 percent the guaranteed wage.

The law also stipulates that the business owner must study all documents demonstrating his company's economic position so he can point out this position to the negotiators and point out whether he can or cannot increase wages. Company owners displayed sensitivity toward this provision because they don't wish to divulge all company secrets to the workers.

The provisions of this law have been drafted in the presence of all parties concerned. Businessmen, industrial unions, the labor federation, the Ministry of Manpower, and legal experts have participated, meeting in a so-called higher committee. There are also subcommittees formed of the three parties and legal experts.

[Rizq] Does this law apply to government employees?

[Al-'Amawi] This law applies to all workers, excluding government workers who are subject to the administrative law and to the public servant theory.

[Rizq] Have workers of privatized companies been harmed?

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[Al-'Amawi] To date, only three [public sector] companies have been completely sold. Not even one of their workers has been discharged.

Other privatized companies have been partially sold by offering part of their shares for public subscription or by diverting it to the workers. Workers in these companies have vied with each other to buy these shares.

Appointment of Graduates

[Rizq] What is the unemployment rate among [university] graduates now?

[Al-'Amawi] There is no problem with any university graduates, except those specialized in business and law. We have a surplus in law. But this is an already resolved problem because law is a free profession. It is in business that we have some stagnation. However, we have gotten to the 1987 and 1988 graduates in some governorates.

[Rizq] What about mid-level education, especially all types of technical schools?

[Al-'Amawi] I would like to point out that 55 percent of the unemployment among the educated comes from graduates of mid-level trade schools. The rest of the unemployment is divided among industrial, agricultural, and other specializations. A comprehensive solution must be developed for the middle-level education problem as a whole, especially trade schools. The pattern of mid-level trade education must be developed, and its efficiency must be enhanced. This is the very difficult problem for which the Education Ministry is trying to develop solutions.

[Rizq] Is there coordination between the Manpower Ministry and the Education Ministry on all these problems?

[Al-'Amawi] In fact, there is coordination ion on distribution and needs. As for coordination on enrollment in universities, it is impossible because this could lead to limiting the number of students accepted at the universities.

[Rizq] But the Manpower Ministry must draw the Education Ministry's attention to the need to amend these policies, especially in middle-level schools.

[Al-'Amawi] At times, we send the Education Ministry studies and reports on the market needs and market surpluses. The enormous number of school and university students cannot be reduced, and this number must be put to use. What I mean is that I am not calling for suspending education because an educated and unemployed young man is much better than an uneducated and unemployed young man.

[Al-'Amawi] What are the specializations that Egypt will need in coming years?

[Al-'Amawi] Languages, mathematics, and music. As for Arabic, al-Azhar graduates solve this problem for us.

[Rizq] What about the graduate distribution system?

[Al-'Amawi] The graduate distribution philosophy contains a mistake that must be obviated and developed. At present, I am required to employ the 1983 graduates. But, at the same time, should I ignore the names of the top 100 graduates in 1994? One finds a big difference between a graduate who came out of college 13 years ago and a recent graduate. The former has perhaps forgotten what he learned whereas the latter has his information and knowledge fresh in his mind. I will ask again: In your opinion, what kind of government job performance would be turned out by a woman who graduated in 1983, got married, has given birth to children, and has stayed home for 12 full years and who wants to be employed now? Does she still remember anything she learned?

If we add to this the fact that there are 4 million government employees now, then do I need to add more to them? I will not conceal from you that nearly 70 percent of these employees do nothing in their jobs. If new needs arise and new expansions occur, then one must make use of what is actually available and must develop it in a manner that permits utilizing it.

[Rizq] So, how will you overcome such an obvious problem?

[Al-'Amawi] My suggestion is that we mix this and that. Let us organize a specific competition that awards points to seniority and points to a new graduate so I can reach the best mix and add it to the government apparatus to enhance its performance. The rest will go to the market, knowing that it has no right to government employment. What is happening now is different. I am surprised to find young men who work in the private sector for high wages and who are secure in their jobs come to demand their right to a government job. They even resign from their private-sector jobs!

[Rizq] Why don't you refuse to appoint them as long as you are certain that they work in the private sector?

[Al-'Amawi] This is a right to which the applicant is entitled by the law. How can I deny him his right?

Appointment to a government job is now a right, even if 20 years lapse on one's graduation. Is it reasonable that such a spirit should prevail? Perhaps the appointments are political. All the same, the right to appointment exists, and I am required to comply with it.

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[Rizq] And what is the solution?

[Al-'Amawi] I ask you: How can we develop a sound distribution in the appointment of graduates? This issue requires that complete policies and concepts be altered, which in turn requires a long time.

[Rizq] Why have labor elections been postponed for a full year? Is it true that they have been postponed because of the rash of elections this year: The Consultative Council, the People's Assembly, and the unions?

[Al-'Amawi] This is likely. Perhaps it is also a coincidence. The main reason is the keenness on a stable climate in the production units so as to avoid labor anxiety. It is well known that the shorter the period between elections, the greater the one-upmanship. The goal is continued stability.

[Rizq] With the aspired stability, we conclude this interview and thank his excellency the minister for this time.

Sudan

Government Protests U.S. Call for Prisoner Release

AB1506100095 Paris AFP in English 0936 GMT 15 Jun 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Khartoum, June 15 (AFP) — Sudan has issued an official protest against a U.S. State Department call for the immediate release of former premier al-Sadiq al-Mahdi, the official press reported Thursday [15 June].

Al-Mahdi, a democratically elected premier, was overthrown six years ago in a bloodless military coup that brought General 'Umar al-Bashir's Moslem fundamentalist-backed junta to power.

The leader of the outlawed opposition Umma party, al-Mahdi was arrested last month with members of his movement after he criticized Sudan's paramount spiritual leader Shaykh Hasan al-Turabi.

The official newspaper AL-SUDAN AL-HADITH said "a strongly- worded" memorandum was handed by the Sudanese foreign ministry to the U.S. Embassy here protesting a recent statement calling for al- Mahdi's release and accusing the Sudanese government of intolerance toward political dissent.

The statement by a U.S. State Department spokesman said Al-Mahdi was arrested for delivering a sermon at a mosque which was sharply critical of the regime and "its de facto leader Hasan al-Turabi".

The Sudanese government protest said the U.S. statement contained "erroneous information" and urged the U.S. Embassy to obtain its information from "the right sources."

It also charged that the spokesman's language did not "conform with diplomatic norms."

Minister Announces Oil Company Accord With China

EA1406185895 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 13 Jun 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The energy and mining minister, Retired Brigadier Salah al-Din Karrar, has announced that an agreement has been reached on establishing a joint Sino-Sudanese drilling company which will operate in Sudan in the field of oil and mineral exploration. He said it was agreed that the Chinese national oil corporation should be allowed to undertake oil exploration in Mujlad area [in southern Kurdufan State]. He also added that an agreement has been reached with the Chinese mining company on gold prospecting in northern Sudan. In a statement to the SUDANESE NEWS AGENCY, Mr. Karrar said that his recent visit to China focused mainly on oil and mineral exploration, and that the two agreements will be signed within the next two months.

Al-Bashir Appoints New Foreign Ministry Official

EA1306205795 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 13 Jun 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The president of the Republic, Staff Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir, has issued a Republican decree appointing ambassador Awad al-Karim Fadlallah 'Ali as first undersecretary of the Foreign Ministry.

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AFP: Rebel Troops Attack Baghdad Radio Installations

NC1406155395 Paris AFP in English 1540 GMT 14 Jun 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman, June 14 (AFP)—An Iraqi army unit attacked radio installations near Baghdad on Wednesday [14 June], triggering a battle with tanks and helicopters, witnesses said.

"A battle with tanks, armoured vehicles and helicopters is taking place in the vicinity of the radio transmitters," they said, contacted by telephone. A unit from Abu Gharib camp mounted the attack on the Baghdad Radio transmitters.

Rebels Said Led by al-Dulaymi General

JN1406173895 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 14 Jun 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Latest reports available from various sources, particularly from Amman, mention that the battalion which attacked the Baghdad radio transmitters in Abu-Gharib near the Iraqi capital is the 14 July Battalion, code-named the party's battalion. It is led by Staff Brigadier General Turki Isma'il al-Dulaymi. The battle is still raging and tanks, armored vehicles, and helicopters are participating. The soldiers, who started out from Abu-Gharib camp, attacked a small airport where Saddam Husayn's private helicopters are stationed. One of the helicopter pilots, whose first name is Samir, was killed.

The Abu-Gharib township where the Baghdad radio transmitters are located is comprised of a large prison where hundreds of Iraqis from al-Anbar Governorate have been imprisoned following the disturbances which shook this governorate on 18 May. Inhabitants of al-Ramadi, one of the largest cities in al-Anbar Governorate, who fled to Jordan said that some 850 persons were arrested in the wake of these disturbances which erupted after the mutilated body of Air Major General Muhammad Mazlum al-Dulaymi was handed over to his family. [passage omitted].

Witnesses Describe 'Showdown'

NC1406181795 Paris AFP in English 1749 GMT 14 Jun 95

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Amman, June 14 (AFP) — An armoured unit mounted a rebellion on the outskirts of the Iraqi capital on Wednesday [14 June], in a showdown between the authorities and the powerful al-Dulaymi tribe, witnesses said.

The 14 July battalion attacked Baghdad Radio transmitters and a private heliport of President Saddam Husayn in the Abu Gharib area, 20 kilometres (12 miles) west of the capital, they said.

The attack, led by General Turki Isma'il al-Dulaymi, triggered a battle with tanks, armoured vehicles and helicopters, the witnesses said, contacted by telephone from Amman.

An air force general was killed in the fighting around the heliport where several homes of pilots were hit, they said.

The 14 July battalion is considered a stalwart of the ruling Ba'th party which it helped to seize power in 1968.

There was no immediate comment from Iraqi authorities, but a correspondent in Baghdad said state radio and television were functioning normally. Baghdad Radio has its headquarters in the capital itself.

Abu Gharib is the site of a prison where hundreds of residents of al-Anbar province have been jailed since clashes which erupted in the region on May 18.

Two Americans jailed for eight years in March for illegal entry from Kuwait, defence contractors David Daliberti and William Barloon, are also being held at Abu Gharib. [passage omitted]

The latest unrest follows the attempted arrest of the son of a al-Dulaymi tribal chief in al-Ramadi, Iraqi travellers in Amman said.

They said a unit led by commander Qasim Muhammad attacked the home of Shaykh Naji Hafat al-Dulaymi on Tuesday to arrest the son, Nawfal, who was shot and seriously wounded in an exchange of fire.

The commander as well as two policemen, 'Abd-al-Amir Tahir and 'Abbas 'Azzah, were killed, they said.

Travellers who arrived Wednesday through al-Ramadi, which lies on the road from Baghdad to Amman, said the situation in the province was tense.

Saddam's special forces later encircled the rebels, who are demanding the release of all Abu Gharib's inmates, the witnesses said.

General al-Dulaymi has vowed "to fight to the death" and his forces, holed up in a two-storey control centre for the radio transmitters, are keeping the 2nd and 4th battalion intervention forces at bay.

The centre lies 11 kilometres (seven miles) from the prison.

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Opposition Figure Confirms Battles

NC1406182295 London MBC Television in Arabic 1816 GMT 14 Jun 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Ahmad al-Bayati, leader of the Iraqi National Congress, which is opposed to the Iraqi regime, has confirmed reports of tank and helicopter battles in the Abu Gharib area near a radio station in Baghdad's outskirts.

These reports have not yet been confirmed by any official announcement or any news agency except AFP.

'Media Source' Denies 'Misleading' Reports

JN1406192795 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1904 GMT 14 Jun 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 14 Jun (INA) — A media source stated in Baghdad today that petrodollars have regrettably managed to buy some AFP and Radio Monte Carlo employees. That is why they have recently begun to carry reports that are not only baseless, but also misleading and deceitful. The latest reports carried by AFP and aired by Monte Carlo Radio today concerned alleged clashes in the Abu-Gharib area near Baghdad.

The source added: We would not have reacted to such lowly behavior had it not been for the fact that the trumpets of the Israel and Gulf radios repeated these lies and failing wishful thinking.

TV Ridicules Reports on Fighting

JN1506070295 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 0600 GMT 15 Jun 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A television station, run by Saddam Husayn's son, 'Udayy, early today ridiculed the reports on fighting between military units in the Baghdad area. The television station said: These reports only exist in the imagination of the enemies. Iraqi television screened film clips of radio and television transmitters in Abu-Gharib operating normally. The television also screened film clips of workers who began their work in the area this morning under normal conditions.

Abu Gharib Surrounded by Saddam Forces

NC1506073595 Paris AFP in English 0705 GMT 15 Jun 95

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Dubai, United Arab Emirates, June 15 (AFP) — Arab diplomats in Baghdad said Thursday [15 June] there was unrest just west of the Iraqi capital and that they were banned from travelling to the area.

"Indeed, there were events" Wednesday at Abu Gharib, 20 kilometers (12 miles) west of Baghdad, an Arab diplomat told AFP when he was contacted from Dubai in the United Arab Emirates.

But he declined to give details on what was happening Thursday.

"The diplomats are not allowed to travel to the area" which is surrounded by forces loyal to President Saddam Husayn, another diplomat said, also confirming there was unrest. [passage omitted]

Leading Rebel Commits Suicide

JN1406204395 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 2000 GMT 14 Jun 95

[From the "Panorama" feature]

[FBIS Translated Text] Our radio has learned that the reports on the attack on Baghdad Radio's transmitters appear to have been exaggerated, and that the officer Turki al-Dulaymi mounted his attack using only three tanks.

Exclusive reports that cannot be independently confirmed say that Turki al-Dulaymi has committed suicide in his tank. The reports add that special forces estimated to total 6,000 men besieged the attack site immediately after the attack took place.

In a related development, several residents of the Abu-Gharib area reported that the situation was quiet this evening. A resident said: We have neither seen nor heard any military action, or any abnormal activities in the area throughout the day.

Additionally, the AFP correspondent reported that traffic along the highway that links Baghdad to the cities of al-Fallujah and al-Ramadi, which passes through the heart of Baghdad, is proceeding normally and smoothly, and people are doing their shopping as usual.

The correspondent added that the Baghdad Radio and Baghdad Television stations are behaving normally, and that their programming was not suspended any time throughout the day.

Rebels 'Crushed' by Special Forces

NC1506082795 Paris AFP in English 0822 GMT 15 Jun 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman, June 15 (AFP) — Iraqi special forces on Thursday [15 June] crushed a revolt by an armoured battalion on the outskirts of Baghdad and the general leading the rebels committed suicide, reliable sources said.

The sources, contacted by telephone from Amman, reported that the 2nd and 6th special intervention forces

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encircled the rebels shortly after the revolt was launched on Wednesday.

General Turki Isma'il al-Dulaymi's forces were wiped out as they tried to march on Abu Gharib jail, 20 kilometres (12 miles) west of Baghdad, to release prisoners held since unrest broke out in western Iraq on May 18, they said.

Opposition Claims Fighting Continuing

LD1506114095 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1020 GMT 15 Jun 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Tehran, 15 Jun (KUNA) — The Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq [SAIRI] has declared in an urgent press statement today that fighting involving the use of all kinds of weapons is still going on between rebel units from the Iraqi Army and pro-Baghdad regime elements in the Abu-Gharib area, which lies 20 km from Baghdad. Other units have joined the rebellious 14 July battalion, the statement says.

The statement, a copy of which KUNA has received, adds that the heavily armed elements of the regime have failed so far in the confrontation with the 14 July battalion, itself one of the armored battalions of the Iraqi Army. The clashes, in which tanks, armored vehicles, helicopters, and medium-size weapons of all kinds are being used, continues.

The statement also says, quoting reports from inside Iraq, that the rebel Army units attacked an airport used by Saddam Husayn's special helicopters, as well as radio transmitters in Abu-Gharib. It goes on to say that those units are in control of the transmitters and that many other units have joined the 14 July battalion, which is commanded by Brigadier Turki Isma'il al-Dulaymi.

The statement quotes informed sources as saying that a number of the regime's elements have fled the battlefield because of the fierce resistance displayed by the rebel Army units.

The source adds that despite the attempts of the ruling regime in Baghdad to minimize the importance of the new military move of the Iraqi Army through rumors and propaganda in order to contain the events, "the actions of the heroic rebel Army units are spreading to areas near Baghdad."

The same sources stress that these serious events have come as a quick and forceful reaction by the sons of the Iraqi Army to the oppressive and terrorizing practices carried out by the Baghdad regime and "its criminal elements" all over Iraq, particularly in the towns and villages of al-Anbar Province. This province was the scene of a wide and thunderous popular uprising which clearly reflected the widespread rejection by the province's people of the policies of the ruling regime.

The events were sparked off in al-Ramadi, the biggest city in al-Anbar Province, after Saddam Husayn's regime last month executed 60 officers of the al-Dulaymi tribe — among them Flight Major General Muhammad Madhlum al-Dulaymi — who were accused of taking part in a coup attempt against the ruler of Baghdad.

The sources stress that the clashes in Abu-Gharib constitute a serious turning point in the struggle between the Iraqi people and Army on the one side and the Baghdad regime on the other.

Brigadier al-Dulaymi is demanding the release of all those detained inside Abu-Gharib prison, one of the large prisons in Iraq where tens of thousands of innocent Iraqis are kept and where barbaric tortures are carried out against the inmates.

Iraqi opposition sources in Tehran describe the Abu-Gharib events as an extension of the great popular uprising in al-Anbar Province, which occupies a large part of the western region of Iraq. Many of its sons occupy important and sensitive positions in the Army, the ruling party, and other important institutions of the regime.

TV Claims al-Dulaym Tribesmen Vow Loyalty to Saddam

JN1406201795 Baghdad Iraq Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 14 Jun 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Leader President Saddam Husayn, may God protect him, has asked Colonel Rukan 'Abd-al-Ghafur to attend, on his behalf, a ceremony for reciting the Opening Chapter of the Holy Koran to evoke God's mercy on the soul of Shaykh Sha'lan Jasim al-'Adwan, leader of the al-Dulaym tribe in the Baghdad Governorate, the al-Mahmudiyah District.

The envoy of his excellency the leader president offered the president's condolences to the deceased man's relatives and tribesmen, who renewed the pledge of loyalty and allegiance to the idolized leader and reiterated their rallying behind the banner of God is Great upheld by his excellency the president, may God protect him. They also prayed to God to protect his excellency the president from each and every mischief, and to keep him as an asset to Iraq and the Arab nation.

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Ramadan on Ending Cooperation With Security Council

JN1406180195 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 1545 GMT 14 Jun 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 14 Jun (PETRA) — Iraqi Vice President Taha Yasin Ramadan has emphasized that many permanent and nonpermanent Security Council member states and other sisterly and friendly countries approve and support Iraq's decision not to continue cooperation with the Council if the report by Special Commission head Rolf Ekeus, which he is due to present on 19 June, does not result in a positive position that contributes to ending the siege imposed on Iraq

In an exclusive statement to the Jordanian News Agency correspondent in Iraq, Ramadan said the visits made by a number of ranking Iraqi officials to various countries were mainly aimed at explaining the Iraqi leadership's view and position to the international community. The Iraqi leadership wants to bring an end to the current state of Iraq's relations with the Security Council, which has continued for five years, and to fully explain the achievements that have been realized. This can be done by answering questions in order to remove any misunderstanding and doubts so that Iraq will not be considered in violation of the Security Council resolutions and international legitimacy.

He added that the Iraqi officials have explained during their meetings with the officials of these countries that Iraq will not move one step further in its cooperation with the Security Council unless it feels the positive and real results of its cooperation. He said Iraq demands a specific and acceptable deadline for lifting the siege imposed on its oil exports and other products, whether this is a full or partial lifting, and without any new conditions.

Ramadan said the new Iraqi position has emerged after the Iraqi leadership felt that the Security Council was not serious concerning adopting a decision on the siege, especially after Ekeus announced more than a year ago that he is satisfied with Iraq's cooperation and abidance by the sanctions imposed on it, something that caused a split in the international consensus for the first time since the imposition of the siege on Iraq.

He said he hoped the Security Council would play its role so its relations with Iraq will not reach a stalemate, and stressed that the Iraqi leadership has the right to make the necessary arrangements to confront any attempts against Iraq's sovereignty and future and in the manner it deems appropriate to realize the best and most positive results for the homeland and the citizens without waiting for mercy from anyone.

Ramadan renewed his regret over the position of some countries on the continuation of the siege, and the pretext of implementing the international legitimacy used by some of these countries. He said Iraq believes that the siege is harming the Iraqi people and killing its children.

On the possibility of establishing an Iraqi-Iranian alliance following the recent statements by several senior Iranian officials on Iran's intention to quickly remove obstacles hampering efforts to restore normal ties with Iraq and the possibility of holding a summit between both countries' presidents, Ramadan asserted that Iraq is remaining silent because of the absence of tangible developments. This silence, he said, does not mean that Iraq is hampering goodwill initiatives and also does not conflict with Iraq's declared principled stand. Iraq, he added, does not object at all to opening a dialogue and establishing all types of relations with all countries except Israel.

Ramadan ruled out the idea of establishing a strategic alliance with Iran as a strategic military power in the region, pointing out that it is premature to analyze and predict matters beyond the current state of affairs.

On the latest developments in Iraqi-Turkish ties, Ramadan said Iraq wants to establish strong good-neighborly ties with Turkey. He added, however, that the Turkish troop invasion of northern Iraq last March was a violation of Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity. This invasion has shaken confidence in the future ties between the two countries, Ramadan said. He added that the exchange of visits between the two countries during that period does not mean that Iraq condones Turkey's attack on the Kurdish people under the cover of crushing the rebellion in Kurdistan.

Ramadan added that despite its rejection and denunciation of the deteriorating conditions and unrest in the region, the Iraqi leadership blames the international forces that have prevented the Iraqi forces from carrying out their duties and the Security Council which did not stop the Turkish violations.

Concluding, Ramadan gave a brief outline of the policy adopted recently by the Iraqi Government. This policy depends primarily on quiet and effective diplomacy to explain Iraq's position. He pointed out that signs of the success of this policy have emerged since the majority of the Security Council permanent member states — France, Russia, and the PRC — now support Iraq. This is in addition to the nonpermanent member states and other brotherly and friendly nations.

Ramadan added that the other aspect of this policy has to do with the domestic situation. It focuses on building the

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basic pillars of the Iraqi economic structure, pursuing the reconstruction drive, and enhancing production in all sectors. The purpose of this is to achieve self-sufficiency on all levels.

Paper Blames U.S., Ekeus for Continuing Embargo

JN1506085795 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0735 GMT 15 Jun 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 15 Jun (INA) — The AL-THAWRAH newspaper has asserted that if the Security Council does not deal fairly with Iraq and implement its reciprocal obligations as stipulated in Paragraph 22 of Resolution 687, then Iraq will be free of its obligations.

In its "Standpoint" column today, the newspaper of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party says Paragraph 22 is a contractual article that clearly links Iraq's obligations to the Security Council's reciprocal obligations by easing the embargo or lifting the blockade fully or partially.

The newspaper deplores the Security Council's disregard for this fact and its evasion of its legal responsibilities under pressure from Washington and to serve its own interests. The paper asks: What does it mean for Iraq to offer everything and get nothing in return, except piracy and attempts at coercion?

The paper blames the U.S. Administration and the UN Special Commission, chaired by Rolf Ekeus, for the Security Council's delay in fulfilling its obligations. The paper says that prior to every review session, Washington and its followers raise several fabricated issues with disinformation campaigns whose motives and cheap objectives have been exposed.

The paper expresses its astonishment at the way the Special Commission has been dealing with Iraq. Apparently, the Special Commission wants to keep our people hostage to the blockade and the war of starvation in order to achieve political ends sought by Washington, the paper says.

The paper highlights the contradictions in Ekeus's statements and stands, saying that his recent statements on the so-called biological file raise doubts about the integrity of his reports.

AL-THAWRAH recalls Ekeus's previous statements that Iraq has fulfilled 90 percent of its commitments. It is strange that after all these years, Ekeus is reopening files which he had closed. Perhaps, this is an attempt to go back to square one.

The paper notes that Ekeus will soon present his semi-annual report to the Security Council on the steps that have been taken, the cooperation files, and the progress made thus far. Keeping things hazy and uncertain without any sign of positive action will complicate the situation and perhaps raise questions about the purpose of cooperation that has so far not produced any sign of hope.

Ministry Denies Plans for Meeting on Missing Persons

JN1506091695 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0835 GMT 15 Jun 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 15 Jun (INA) — Iraq has denied allegations by the Kuwaiti foreign minister about convening a meeting on the Iraq-Kuwait border in the next two weeks to discuss the issue of missing Kuwaitis.

In a statement to INA, an Iraqi Foreign Ministry spokesman said the statement made by Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sabah al-Ahmad that a tripartite technical subcommittee will meet on the Iraq-Kuwait border in the second half of June is a baseless allegation.

Last Sunday [11 June], al-Ahmad told the news agency KUNA that the tripartite subcommittee will meet on the Iraq-Kuwait border to follow up the issue of the missing Kuwaitis.

The Iraqi Foreign Ministry spokesman said the statement of the Kuwaiti foreign minister is an attempt at confusion and distortion. This is part of the Kuwaiti rulers' policy in dealing with the issue of missing Kuwaitis.

The spokesman said by such statements and practices, the rulers of Kuwait seek to create a false impression that they continue to attend the meetings of the technical subcommittee on missing persons.

The spokesman condemned the attempts of the al-Sabah regime to obstruct the operations of the subcommittee and prevent it from closing the file on the missing persons. This regime has caused an interruption in the monthly meetings of the subcommittee throughout the past three months.

The Iraqi spokesman said the International Committee of the Red Cross [ICRC] has recently proposed that the subcommittee's meetings be held in the region instead of in Geneva. Iraq has replied to the ICRC proposal, but the rulers of Kuwait have not yet sent their reply.

By way of revealing the truth about maneuvering of the Kuwaiti position to obstruct the operations of the tripartite technical subcommittee, the Iraqi spokesman went on to say: The ICRC proposal is the second of its kind, after the rulers of Kuwait decided at the last

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minute not to attend a meeting on 6 May, without giving any excuse for their absence.

The Iraqi Foreign Ministry spokesman held the rulers of Kuwait responsible for their maneuvers and for exploiting the issue of missing persons for political purposes.

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Shahal on Internal Security After Redeployment

TA1406183895 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 14 Jun 95

[Report on interview with Police Minister Moshe Shahal by political correspondent 'Imanu'el Rosen in Shahal's office on 14 June — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] Police Minister Moshe Shahal has announced that he will not be responsible for Israel's internal security if the government does not change its security plans in anticipation of the IDF's [Israel Defense Forces] redeployment in the territories. Our political correspondent 'Imanu'el Rosen reports:

[Begin recording] [Rosen] If not on 1 July, then sometime later next month an agreement will be signed with 'Arafat, the IDF will begin pulling out from the center of towns, and preparations will begin for the Palestinian elections. This assessment emerged today in yet another discussion summoned by Yitzhaq Rabin, far from the cameras and the media, in anticipation of the target date.

The most serious and worrisome prognosis in this debate was made by Moshe Shahal. The police minister repeated some of the harsh words he said in person to Yitzhaq Rabin a few days ago: The army is going to pull away from the dividing line, although no security arrangements have been made inside Israel's territory. I have no answer or solution on how to safeguard the security of the settlements along the divide line. The army is solving its own problems in the territories. Some 300 million shekels have already been allocated for the protection of the settlements, but not even one cent for the protection of places inside Israel. What will we tell the residents of Kefar Sava? What will we tell the residents of 'Afula? The problem in Jerusalem is appalling and we will not be able to act there. Given this state of affairs, I am not prepared to take responsibility for the internal security in Israel. I will tell the IDF: With all due respect, the responsibility is yours.

In a special interview with Channel 2 held in his office today, Moshe Shahal confirmed that this indeed was what he said, and he even went on to elaborate.

[Shahal] Undoubtedly, we will have to provide an answer to the settlements near the dividing line and to the entire territory of the State of Israel regarding the necessary security components. In the absence of such security arrangements, I definitely believe that a solution is required for the problems in places such as Kefar Sava opposite Qalqilyah, and 'Afula and the Ta'anakh region opposite Janin. These are extremely serious problems which call for an immediate solution.

[Rosen] But you drafted a plan, the separation plan, which actually provides an answer to those problems.

[Shahal] That plan is waiting for the end of the discussions about the IDF's redeployment in Judaea and Samaria, and I am apprehensive about the timetable. The best example probably is the proximity of Qalqilyah to the dividing line, which calls for a solution. I think that at least part of the solution is not in dispute, and I think that a budget can and must be allocated for those elements now so as to start implementing them.

[Rosen] If all this does not happen, will the Israel Police have no answer and solution for the residents of Kefar Sava, Ra'anana, and 'Afula?

[Shahal] The answer will be insufficient. Moreover, I think it a proper answer would be impossible if the main points of the plan are not adopted.

[Rosen] What Shahal is saying is definitely serious. The man responsible for internal security in the State of Israel is this evening telling hundreds of thousands of citizens living along the Green Line that their security is in jeopardy. The prime minister promised Shahal to hold a debate soon, but the impression is that at the moment Mr. Rabin's attention is centered on safeguarding the security of the settlers in the territories. [end recording]

In response, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin categorically rejected Minister Shahal's allegations. Rabin said that the IDF today safeguards the security of the settlements along the dividing line and will continue to do so in the future.

Likud leader Binyamin Netanyahu said that Minister Shahal exposed the fire sale of Israel's security being conducted by the Rabin government. The chairman of the opposition promised that within the next few days the Likud will hold a series of demonstrations in the cities along the Green Line.

'Settlement Nucleus' Said Set Up in North Strip

TA1306174495 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 13 Jun 95

[Uri Revah video report]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Without pomp and without any media coverage, a new settlement nucleus was established in the heart of the settlement of Nisanit in northern Gaza Strip. Fourteen families broke into empty houses in Nisanit in the past two weeks with the full cooperation of the settlement committee, which primed the houses for their inhabitants. [passage omitted]

Not all the new families were ideologically motivated. Some are newly married couples and families who lived

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in rented apartments inside the Green Line. The Nisanit committee charges them 450 shekels per month in rent.

The Construction and Housing Ministry said in reaction that the squatters violated the law although they knew they were about to receive permits to inhabit the houses.

Officer Views IDF Role in Negotiations

TA1406131195 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 14 Jun 95 p 1

[Report by Alon Pinkas]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The army's central role in negotiations with Syria on security arrangements is a potential political minefield that could entrap the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and seriously imperil its apolitical status, a senior officer warned yesterday.

"The danger concerns both the substantive level and public perceptions of the army," the officer stressed.

The warning came the same day a poll was published in YEDI'OT AHARONOT indicating that 65.6 percent of the public is more inclined to trust the army's position on withdrawal from the Golan Heights than statements by politicians. The poll was conducted by the Steinmetz Center for Peace Studies at Tel Aviv University.

The danger therefore seems to lie not just in what the army's position would be, but how it would be made public, especially when political distortions of that position from both the left and the right are to be expected.

Ostensibly, Israeli Ambassador to the US Itamar Rabinovich will maintain his role as senior negotiator with the Syrians, but the arrival in Washington of Chief of the General Staff Lt.-Gen. Amnon Lipkin-Shahaq, accompanied by two and possibly three major-generals, will inevitably attract the spotlight and place the army at the epicenter of the talks.

Thus, no matter what its professional opinions are, the army is likely to be criticized for becoming politicized, as was the case with the negotiations leading to the Cairo agreement.

The generals who will join Shahaq for his meetings with Syrian CGS [Chief of General Staff] Gen. Hikmat Shihabi will be the military secretary to the prime minister, Maj.-Gen. Dani Yatom, OC [officer commanding] Planning Branch Maj.-Gen. 'Uzi Dayan and possibly the outgoing OC Intelligence Branch, Maj.-Gen. Uri Sagi.

"The situation is dangerous for the army by virtue of its simplicity," the senior officer said. "If the chief of the general staff says anything publicly, or the Israeli, US or even Syrian media report anything that implies that he has reservations concerning the settlement, Prime Minister Rabin's chances of winning a referendum are slim.

"If the CGS endorses the agreement and if the army is satisfied with security arrangements, the government's prospects are much more promising. But the problem is that, theoretically, it is not for the army to reject, endorse or even express an opinion on a political deal, but only to present its impartial professional assessment of the security arrangements.

"I would carefully put it this way," the officer said. "Never has a chief of the general staff been in such a precarious position."

President To Snub Irish Minister Over Orient House

TA1506104495 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 15 Jun 95 p 2

[Report by Batsheva Tsur and AP]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President 'Ezer Weizman has canceled a meeting with Irish Foreign Minister Dick Spring, following his insistence on meeting with Palestinian leader Faysal al-Husayni at Orient House.

Weizman took the decision in consultation with the Foreign Ministry, a spokesman for Bet Hanasi [the presidential residence] said. The ministry had appealed to visiting leaders to refrain from meetings with the Palestinians in Jerusalem.

Spring is determined to meet with PLO officials at Orient House later this week despite Israel's objections, said an official in Dublin.

"I think it's based on guidelines which are produced by European Union members," said the official. "European Union foreign ministers visit Orient House. That is the practice."

However, an Israeli Foreign Ministry official said such meetings violate the Israel-PLO accord, which says Palestinian diplomatic activity is confined to the Gaza Strip and Jericho.

"We have no objection to Mr. Spring or any other official visitor meeting the Palestinian Authority in Gaza or Jericho," he said.

"On the contrary...we welcome any involvement by European countries in development of the Palestinian economy. However, to visit the Orient House would cause a disagreement with Israel which is quite unnecessary."

Spring arrives on Saturday night [17 June] for the first official visit by an Irish foreign minister.

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A recent visit by Sweden's deputy prime minister, Mona Salin, was cut short because the Israeli hosts objected to her visiting the Orient House. Salin left rather than provoke a confrontation.

[Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew on 15 June publishes on page 11 a report by Hemi Shalev which adds: "Senior Foreign Ministry sources last night criticized President 'Ezer Weizman, who announced that he would not meet Irish Foreign Minister Dick Spring because of his plans to visit Orient House in East Jerusalem."

["The senior Foreign Ministry sources said that through his move the president is giving the Palestinians 'veto powers' over the visits of foreign dignitaries in Israel. One senior source said: 'Weizman has started managing Israel's foreign policy.'"

["Arye Shumer, director general of the presidential residence, last night rejected the Foreign Ministry's criticism, saying that the president 'attaches great importance to Spring's visit to Israel.' At the same time, Shumer noted, the president does not believe that Spring or any other visitor should be allowed 'to set conditions' about the sites that they will or will not visit in the course of an official visit to Israel."]

Right-Wing Group Stages Protest Near Orient House

TA1206113595 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 12 Jun 95 p A4

[Report by Nadav Shragay]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Deputy Jerusalem Mayor Shmu'el Me'ir and a group of right-wing figures started a sit-in near Orient House in East Jerusalem yesterday morning, demanding that the Government of Israel close down the building.

Me'ir moved his office to the site and announced that he would tend to daily municipality matters from the protest site. He maintained that the Government of Israel continues to hoodwink the public with grand statements on the unity of Jerusalem while willfully promoting a policy perpetuating a process of city division.

"Orient House is a symbol, but there are over 40 other institutions in East Jerusalem, some affiliated with the Palestinian Authority [PA], some having nothing to do with the PA, others belonging to the Rejectionist Front — and yet the Government of Israel has been doing nothing about them," Me'ir said. He maintained that 400 men — some armed — operate in Jerusalem on behalf of Jibril al-Rujub and other PLO organizations "with the authorities turning a blind eye, if not actually permitting it."

Among the most prominent protesters are Professor Yisra'el Uman, laureate of the Israel Award in physics; Prof. Zaritsky from Beersheba University; Rabbi Beni Alon, head of the Bet Orot Yeshiva on the Mount of Olives; Mati Dan, one of the 'Ateret Kohanim society leaders; former Prime Minister's Office Director Yosi Ben-Aharon; and several Jewish leaders from the United States. The demonstrators announced that the protest center they hope to set up around Orient House will be the start of a series of activities in East Jerusalem designed to rally public support for an active struggle against PLO operations in East Jerusalem and for a protest against the government ignoring these activities and what they term the illegal East Jerusalem construction initiated and financed by the PLO. [passage omitted]

[A related report by Nadav Shragay on the same page adds: "In a letter to Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, Knesset Member Yehoshu'a Matza, head of the Knesset Interior Committee, cites an Israel Police report on PA organizations' activities in Jerusalem, which states that 'the activities of statelike Palestinian institutions have been stepped up since the Oslo agreement.'

["Matza's detailed letter to Rabin, which was presented yesterday at the right-wing protest center near Orient House, listed 12 PA-affiliated institutions and bodies operating in East Jerusalem:

["1. Orient House — the PLO and PA's quasi 'foreign ministry.' 2. Communications and religious affairs bureau. 3. Palestinian Radio and Television Authority, whose studios are located in Ramallah, Jericho, and Gaza, with the administration work being done by Radwan Abu-'Ayyash in his offices on al-Mas'udi Street in Jerusalem. 4. Palestinian Bureau of Statistics, operating on 442 Shekhem Road in Jerusalem's al-Shaykh Jarrah neighborhood. 5. Palestinian Economic Committee on Development and Reconstruction, situated on the edge of the Jerusalem municipal boundaries. 6. Palestinian Energy Research Center in the Dahiyat al-Barid neighborhood. 7. Palestinian Geographic Research and Information Center in Dahiyat al-Barid. 8. Palestinian Housing Council. 9. Palestinian Economic Committee on Development and Reconstruction [as published]. 10. Palestinian Supreme Industry Council. 11. Land and Water Institute."]

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'Serbian-Yugoslav' Official's Visit Seen as 'Thaw'

TA1506122395 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 15 Jun 95 p 3

[Report by Teddy Preuss; Serbian names as transliterated]

[FBIS Translated Text] A senior Serbian-Yugoslav Foreign Ministry official arrived in Israel this week aboard a YAT flight. The Yugoslav airline will henceforth operate a weekly flight every Sunday.

Sivodin Jovanovic spent three days in Israel, in the course of which he met with Yo'el Sher, director of the Foreign Ministry's Eastern European Division; Ori Or, chairman of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, who visited Belgrade last year; committee member Eliyahu Ben-Elisar of the Likud; Avi Becker, head of the American Jewish Congress in Israel; and Yisra'el Gat, the Labor Party's official in charge of foreign relations.

This is the first visit by a diplomat from Belgrade since 1991, and the first since international sanctions were imposed on Yugoslavia. Yugoslavia severed relations with Israel in 1967 following the Six-Day War and is currently represented by a charge d'affaires, Mirco Stefanovic. He has not yet been accredited officially because of the boycott on his country.

In the talks with Jovanovic it was decided to hold more frequent meetings between representatives of the two countries. No economic issues were discussed owing to the restrictions on trade with Yugoslavia (only medication and nonstrategic goods are allowed). Consequently, the discussions centered on tourism and the exchange of unofficial delegations. The first step was the YAT flight this week, which flew back to Belgrade with a group of travel agents and tourism journalists and a television crew.

Political circles were cautious in their assessment. They said that the thaw in relations should not yet be seen as a breakthrough, which will be possible only when the sanctions on Yugoslavia are lifted. Belgrade's help in releasing the hostages in Bosnia and its pressure on the Bosnian Serbs to soften their position on the compromise plans being proposed created a more amenable climate and widened the crack opened in the relations with Israel.

Minister: Pentagon Preventing Pollard Release

TA1406154795 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1500 GMT 14 Jun 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Justice Minister David Liba'i has criticized the U.S. Pentagon for acting against efforts to release convicted spy Jonathan Pollard. Minister Liba'i was responding for the government in the Knesset plenum. Likud Knesset Member [MK] 'Uzi Landau attacked Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres after the television interview this week in which Pollard's father says Peres admitted that Israel had betrayed Jonathan. David Ze'ev reports:

[Begin recording] [Pollard's father] ...we betrayed your son. I said: What do you mean? Well, we felt that if we cooperated with the U.S. Government in prosecuting Jonathan, they would be easier on us.

[Ze'ev] Those were some of the comments made by Jonathan Pollard's father about Foreign Minister Peres in the Israel Television interview this week which sparked the Knesset debate. One of the motions for the debate was presented by Likud MK 'Uzi Landau who attacked the foreign minister. The other motion was by Labor's Hagay Merom who criticized Landau for making Pollard's release a political question.

Justice Minister David Liba'i said a personal plea for Pollard's release was made by Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin when he met President Bill Clinton in the U.S. last month, and contacts, he said, have taken place over recent days. Liba'i recalled his own meeting once with Attorney General Janet Reno, during which, he says, he presented for close to an hour the case for freeing the convicted spy immediately. Liba'i says he expressed his dismay that the U.S. defense secretary saw fit to intervene in the trial and that in Israel, such a step would be unacceptable and that in Israel plea bargains are customarily honored, but that in Pollard's case, the U.S. court and the authorities did not.

Still, it is no secret, Liba'i told the Knesset, that members of the American defense establishment are the ones who ardently oppose Pollard's release. The justice minister said Israel does not justify what was done, but that after almost 10 years of imprisonment — most of the time in solitary confinement — Israel does believe the U.S. should take into account the changes in the world and in the Middle East and the wish of Israelis during a period of very good relations between Jerusalem and Washington to release Jonathan Pollard.

House Speaker Shevah Weiss said the text of the justice minister's Knesset statement would be sent to Pollard's parents. [end recording]

'Terrorist' Activity Reportedly Decreasing

TA1306180095 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 13 Jun 95

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] The number of terrorist actions has considerably decreased in recent months. Shin Bet

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data, which has reached our political correspondent Gadi Sukenik, indicates that April had the lowest number of terrorist incidents since the beginning of intifadah about nine years ago. A whole range of incidents are listed, including the throwing of Molotov cocktails, shootings, and the planting of bombs.

The data shows that 49 terrorist incidents took place along the Green Line and in Jerusalem in April, compared to 302 incidents in April last year. The number of incidents recorded in March this year was 60, compared to 384 last year, and in February — 60 incidents, compared with 412 last year.

The number of terror incidents coming from the Gaza Strip is very low, and most of the incidents take place in Israeli-controlled territory.

May 1995 NEQUDA Review

TA1306124995

[FBIS Editorial Report] The following is a review of the May issue of NEQUDA, the monthly Hebrew-language magazine published by the Society for the Advancement of Settlement and Absorption in Judaea, Samaria, the Gaza Strip, and the Jordan Valley, which serves as the political organ of the Jewish settlers in the territories. These reports include summaries of all articles, reports, interviews, commentaries, and other items with a bearing on political affairs published in NEQUDA.

CONTENTS:

1. Editorial
2. Rise and Let Us Go Forth to Zion
3. The Dishonorable Government
4. Where Are the Thousands of Graduates of Hesder Yeshivas and Girls' Seminaries

EDITORIAL

The column, appearing on pages 10 and 11, consists of four essays of varying lengths. The first is a 600-word essay entitled: "To Liberate Jerusalem Again (From Rabin, Peres, and al-Husayni)," calling for the downfall of the Labor government because of its policies on Jerusalem. It says that despite Rabin's repeated claims that Jerusalem will remain forever the unified capital of the Jewish people, "the truth is that 28 years after Jerusalem's liberation, a large question mark hovers over the word 'unified,' which Rabin uses so frequently." The essay notes that Israel "makes sure" that Foreign Minister Peres' promise to "the terrorists' head" that his organization would have "a political status" in the city is being "scrupulously upheld," through Orient House's activities. Another clear indication of the government's "true intentions" about Jerusalem's future is its handling of two affairs: Its conduct over Senator Robert Dole's initiative to relocate the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem "did everything possible to cool down the fervor of the U.S. lawmakers," because it is claimed the move could "harm" the peace process. A no less "symptomatic and fateful" government action is its public commitment to the UN secretary general "not to confiscate any more land for building purposes," which if implemented will with time "disturb the demographic balance in the town in the Arabs' favor."

"These failures must bring us to the conclusion that we must not wait until the elections to remove this evil and inept government."

A 600-word essay entitled "The Withdrawal Path" comments on the Third Way, the movement which considers the Golan Heights and the Jordan Valley "Israel's defense border." "Their concept is pragmatic and their main motive is security," but they are prepared to give up Israeli sovereignty over large parts of Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip due to the "demographic problem." The writer says that since "the real dispute in Israeli society is not territorial but over principles, and touches on the deepest facets of the return to Zion and the aims of the Jewish state's existence in the Land of Israel," there cannot be a third way that forms a bridge between "the national approach — which maintains that we returned to Israel in order to build a Jewish state on all the land we hold — and the traditional 'refugee' approach — which claims that it was not for overriding national aims that we returned to Eretz Yisra'el, but to find a physical shelter and to set up 'a spiritual center.'"

A 400-word essay entitled "Efrat's Bar Mitzvah" praises the Jewish settlement's achievements on its 13th anniversary. "It has 1,000 families, a superb education system, and excellent urban planning." "Opposition among various components of the Israeli government to Efrat's very existence shows how important its establishment was and what a central role it plays in preventing the erosion of withdrawal even from the 'Etzyon Bloc and southward toward the Hebron hills."

A 600-word essay entitled "A Year After the Escape From Gaza," contends that the promise that 'Arafat will put things in order in the Gaza Strip when the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] pulls out of there has not been fulfilled.

"— There has been a most dangerous rise in the number of weapons held by the Palestinian Authority and among those who oppose the agreements with Israel.

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"— Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Islamic Jihad have been significantly strengthened without any real interference by the autonomy authorities. The outcome: A sharp rise in the number of casualties in recent months from attacks by terrorists from the Gaza Strip (Bet Lid, Kefar Darom, etc.)

"— Contrary to the accord — which states that there will be only 7,000 Palestinian policemen — the number of people bearing arms and wearing uniforms ('the police force') is some 20,000. This is a large and threatening army."

RISE AND LET US GO FORTH TO ZION

The 2,000-word article by Hilel Weiss, a right-wing religious ideologue, on pages 12, 13, and 14, stipulates that "since defending the Golan Heights involves defending Temple Mount, and since defending Temple Mount is tied to going up to Temple Mount, we simply have to go up to Temple Mount, to wherever the rabbis say it is permitted, and not be afraid of those rabbis who have banned such a move. During this time of war, a war for our very existence, we are permitted to shirk off the Diaspora."

The writer urges setting up "new gates to Jerusalem on all four sides of the town beyond the current borders of the sovereignty." In the south near 'Etzyon Bloc, in the north near Bet El, in the east below Ma'ale Adumim, and in the West at the Shoresh Junction." The centers will be devoted to issues described by "our wise elders." "In the north, a financial center; in the south, a center of learning; in the east, a center of religious learning; and in the west, an arts and crafts center."

The author states that "together with the ultra-orthodox public we have the power to force the Knesset to establishment a house of representatives of Torah, of the Hebrew legal system, which would have only consultative powers, but with which all legislators must consult. A Knesset law would compel legislators in the lower house to send bills to the house representing Hebrew law, and to consult with it on all laws and political or economic steps, but without an mandate to accept its view. If this is not done, the legislative process will be obstructed and will not be completed."

THE DISHONORABLE GOVERNMENT

This 5,000-word article by author and publicist Moshe Shamir on pages 16, 17, 18, 19, and 41 calls the Rabin government "a government of chaos." He writes that "the epidemic of self-destruction from which this government suffers is not restricted to the external areas of existence of the people and the state, such as security, policy, and sovereignty — but is already part of the very fabric of our lives domestically." Shamir discusses three government "crimes": "The government of bandits, the government of anarchy, and the government of dishonor."

In reference to the "government of bandits," Shamir asserts that the current government's economic policies are "total chaos." "It does not understand them itself, except for one thing, which it does with infinite energy, cheating the public."

While promising to fight inflation, the government's "main aim is to reestablish its Bolshevik-party power centers." After two-and-a-half years in power "it is clear that this government is transferring, planning to transfer, and about to transfer, up to 100 billion shekels to the corrupt and shriveled coffers of its party institutions." He says "the current government has a single aim: To rebuild the power base of the Israeli left, while 'drying up' all genuine nationalist activity and abandoning the primary nationalist interests."

Meretz "has an important role in the climate of nihilistic permissiveness, which for some years has constituted the most dangerous internal threat to our national existence. It rejects everything and tries to destroy everything." It is therefore, "no accident, that the government lists to the left, like a sinking ship. We can argue day and night over the significance of the terms left and right, but in our reality, in this generation, there is no doubt that the more it moves left, the sharper the moral and cultural permissiveness. That is the terrible tragic history of the Jewish people in our generation."

Shamir attacks the "hysterical brainwashing" of Rabin's "dishonorable" government, claiming that "only somebody desperate, frustrated, and above all, blinded by self-hate, can fall to such a level of deception." The author charges the Rabin government with "hatred" toward "religious Zionist youth." Unlike them, "Yitzhaq Rabin is running amok, leading the flight from all values and decency." To conclude, the author contends that "the removal of the government of robbers and anarchy and dishonor is merely a question of time," while "the national camp, the camp of loyalists to the Jewish people and Eretz Yisra'el, will unify and fortify."

WHERE ARE THE THOUSANDS OF GRADUATES OF HESDER YESHIVAS AND GIRLS SEMINARIES?

The 1,200-word article by Yisra'el Elida', described as a resident of Qatzrin on the Golan Heights, opens by stating that his aim "is to settle accounts with our public, with our allies, with our brothers and friends, with those who belong to religious Zionism."

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The author contends that "the religious-nationalist public has always led Zionism on a path linking Israeli statehood and Jewish spirituality. Following the Six-Day War, that course gathered speed in attaining Jewish control over the parts of Eretz Yisra'el that were liberated." He maintains that "we pride ourselves, with a great deal of justice, in being the 'elected elite' and the spearhead of the force. We speak with pride about our sons in the hesder yeshivas and our girls in the seminaries, and melt with pride when they are called 'the cherry on the icing.' But despite all these cliches, I ask: Where are they? Why do we not see masses of graduates from Bene 'Aqiva, the hesder yeshivas, the girls' seminaries, tens and tens of thousands of them, in the Golan settlements, where the population is more or less the same as it was 20 years ago, with one big difference — it is older, more tired, and anxious for reinforcements."

The author charges that "in order to convince the government of surrender that it should not get involved in an impossible evacuation, tens of thousands of determined Jews should go there (now!) and hold onto it forever." He contends that he is not trying to downplay the importance of settlement in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip. "On the contrary, I am proud of them, but it is jealousy speaking from my heart. Why here, on the Golan, do we not also have over 140,000 settlers, who are 'standing guard over' Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip, and have removed from the agenda even the imaginary possibility of entering into a terrible confrontation with a huge mass of determined people secure in the justice of their path?"

"The leaflet 'The People Are with the Golan' is not only a fact and a wish, but an outcry in the form 'The Golan With the People.' In other words, a Golan full of the people of Israel. Strengthening the Golan is not only paying a visit to Mount Hermon or a Bene 'Aqiva convention there. These are pleasant enough events, but they are short term. A real achievement would be 'here is my home, on the Golan.'"

The Golan settlements were set up by the previous generation, soon after the plateau's capture in the Six-Day War. The youngest settlement, Aloney Habashan, was established 15 years ago, "and these settlements, especially the latter, need lots of reinforcements (not to mention that our public on the Golan has not set up a single settlement in half a generation!)"

To conclude, the author writes: "For your information, there is still no White Paper on the Golan, there are still no quotas for Jews going to live there." "How long will you refuse to see the looming danger? Are you blind and are your hearts blocked? God forbid, when it is too late will you be able to wash your hands and say, we could not help? Pray to God that that terrible scenario does not come to pass. Where would we hide our shame? What would we say and how would we justify ourselves to our children, history, and the creator?"

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Christopher Helping 'Bridge Gap' With Israel

JN1506080195 Amman AKHBAR AL-USBU' in Arabic 15 Jun 95 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman, AKHBAR AL-USBU' — A senior Jordanian official has asserted that there are wide differences between Israel and Jordan that have obstructed many agreements that should be signed between the two countries to normalize bilateral relations, as the peace treaty stipulates.

The official disclosed that U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher has mediated between Amman and Tel Aviv to bridge the gap in the positions of the two countries, especially regarding the issues of water and trade. Israel refuses to meet basic Jordanian needs and insists that the agreement serve its own interests.

The official said Jordan told the U.S. secretary of state that it cannot accept Israel's proposals because they mean the end for Jordan's economy and the continuation of the water crisis Jordan is suffering. The official added that Jordan refused to sign a draft trade agreement with Israel that stipulates free trade between the two countries, provided that this is implemented gradually over three years. He said Jordan proposed a plan to set up free trade zones instead of the principle of free trade that is supported by Washington.

The official noted that the joint Jordanian-Israeli water projects all serve the interests of Israel.

Israeli Limits on Trade With Palestinians Assailed

JN1506101995 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 15 Jun 95 pp 1, 29

[Report by 'Isam Qadamani]

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman — A responsible source considers Israel's permission for 15 Jordanian trucks and 15 Palestinian trucks each day to transport their goods starting today, 15 June, between Jordan and the self-rule area a restriction on trade between the two sides.

The source told AL-RA'Y that Jordan is demanding direct trade with the self-rule authority and the West Bank in an integrated manner without any conditions or restrictions.

He added that Israel's decision, as it stands, confirms its determination to control the Palestinian economy and hence deprive Jordan of any real trade with the Palestinian brothers. He added that the decision obstructs the freedom of moving Jordanian goods to Palestinian markets and tightens Israeli control over Palestinian trade.

The source said that Israel has previously made this proposal to Jordan, which was met with absolute rejection because it harms Jordan's vital interests in the self-rule areas and West Bank. It also harms Palestinian interests resulting from free trade with Jordan.

The source stressed that Jordan is eager to establish integrated trade relations with the Palestinian side. Jordan also showed total willingness to provide the Palestinian side with its needs of cement and steel as stipulated by the economic agreement on the exchange of goods signed between the two sides. However, the source noted, this Israeli decision blocks and restricts this entire process.

In statements carried by AFP, Israel yesterday announced that it approves opening the borders between Jordan and the self-rule area in Jericho and the West Bank to give way to direct trade between the Palestinians and Jordanians. Israel also said that it gave permission for 15 Jordanian trucks and 15 Palestinian trucks to transport their goods on a daily basis. This is provided that these trucks unload their goods at King Husayn Bridge without crossing into self-rule areas and the West Bank.

Government To Aid PA With Housing, Public Works

JN1406085295 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 14 Jun 95 p 3

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman (J.T.) — The Ministry of Public Works and Housing Tuesday [13 June] announced that it would extend whatever assistance is needed by the Palestine National Authority (PNA) [Palestinian Authority, PA] to enable it to lay the infrastructure for the different Palestinian institutions.

Ministry Secretary General Bashir al-Jaghbeer told a PNA delegation led by Daifullah al-Akhras, undersecretary of the Palestinian Ministry of Public Works, that various available expertise in the housing and public works fields would be at the disposed of the Palestinian side in implementation of agreements signed by Jordan and PNA last December and in a show of solidarity with the Palestinian people.

A general review of areas of possible cooperation between the two sides was made at the meeting which was chaired by Minister of Public Works and Housing Abd al-Razzak Ensour and ministry officials.

According to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Mr. al-Akhras said that the PNA was in dire need of Jordanian assistance at this stage of constructing the foundation of the Palestinian state.

Stressing the strong brotherly ties of the Jordanian and Palestinian people, Mr. al-Akhras said that the Palestinians deeply appreciate Jordan's help.

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Petra said the two sides agreed that the Jordanian Ministry of Public Works will supply the PNA with lists of laboratory equipment and machinery being utilised by the ministry in Amman along with the format of official documents, like contract forms as well as bylaws governing public works operations in the Kingdom.

Paper Discusses Possible Cabinet Reshuffle

JN1506090895 Amman THE STAR in English 15 Jun 95 p 1

[Special report by Ahmad Shakir and Hamdan al-Hajj]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The six-month-old Government of al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir could face its first reshuffle soon, according to sources close to the Cabinet.

Independent sources say al-Sharif Zayd is trying to delay the reshuffle until the Lower House, in extraordinary session, passes critical and controversial draft laws, including the abolition of economic boycott laws still in effect against Israel.

The reshuffle option is becoming more realistic, especially since one cabinet member and Lower House deputy, Minister of Higher Education Dr Ratib al-Sa'ud, is the subject to a legal case. The general prosecutor has filed a petition with the Lower House requesting that Dr. al-Sa'ud's Parliamentary immunity be lifted prior to the launch of legal proceedings against him.

But it is not yet clear if the deputies, who on Monday [12 June] inaugurated their three-month extraordinary session, will be able to include this issue on their present agenda. Speaker of the Lower House Sa'd Hayil al-Surur is said to be consulting with the Government on this point, but a number of parliamentarians have said the House can debate the issue of lifting parliamentary immunity at any time.

Another reason for accelerating the cabinet reshuffle is that the government is under pressure from a number of parliamentary blocs to include its representatives in the cabinet. These include the National Action Bloc, headed by 'Abd-al-Hadi al-Majali, which already has five seats in the present cabinet.

A third and probably the most legitimate case for a reshuffle is the Amman Economic Summit, scheduled for October, which requires a technocrat team of ministers with economic backgrounds in order to ensure the best preparation for the meeting.

In addition to all of the above, al-Sharif Zayd's cabinet is suffering from lack of homogeneity among its members, including senior ministers.

Observers believe al-Sharif Zayd will also consider reducing the numbers of portfolios, which currently stands at 31 including seven ministers of state. But the Prime Minister will not have to ask the House for a new vote of confidence if he decides to reshuffle his cabinet.

Observers believe he extraordinary session of Parliament, which convened this week, will be a true test for all factions under the dome.

This test emphatically points to the fact that the government will obtain whatever it seeks, though this may take some time. The extraordinary session is scheduled to last 75 days.

The opening session on Monday started a vehement struggle led by the Islamic Action Front-dominated opposition, which insists that the session is unconstitutional, and therefore should not be held.

The agenda of the current session covers 27 bills presented by the Government for passage, most important of which are the bills relating to the anti-Israeli boycott. It was obvious from the first session, however, that the opposition had little chance of success, and that the majority backs the Government's position. Many observers are now confident that the laws abolishing the anti-Israeli legislation will be passed by a comfortable majority.

With revived talk of a pending cabinet reshuffle, many would-be ministers in Parliament are eager to show their support.

Their hopes, however, may be dashed. The cabinet of Zayd Bin-Shakir was strengthened by His Majesty King Husayn's recent statements expressing full support for the Government during a recent visit to the Prime Ministry.

Some deputies are expressing their support for the Government, arguing that Jordan is a poor country and the weakest link in the peace process. Had the Jordan-Israel peace treaty not been signed, they argue, Jordan would have gone with the wind, forgotten by the Arab world and forsaken by its friends in the West.

The current Jordanian-Palestinian rapprochement provides added impetus for those who are hesitating. Yet the King and other senior officials say the relationship has never been better.

During the meeting between King Husayn and representatives of the media, the Monarch stressed that abolition of anti-Israeli legislation is a prerequisite for the Amman economic summit, scheduled for October. This underscores the importance of the extraordinary session for

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the future of the Jordanian economy. As such, Parliament — and in particular the opposition — cannot and should not act as an obstacle to Jordan's development.

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Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' Arrives

NC1406162295 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1530 GMT 14 Jun 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' arrived at the al-Masna' border post at about 1700 today. He was received by Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz and a delegation from the Foreign Ministry. Minister Buwayz accompanied the Syrian minister to the Presidential Palace in B'abda to meet President Ilyas al-Hirawi.

Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad dispatched Foreign Minister al-Shar' to brief Lebanese officials on the results of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's tour of the region. [passage omitted]

Comments on Meeting With al-Hirawi, Birri

NC1406183195 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 14 Jun 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Tonight's meeting in the B'abda Palace involving President Ilyas al-Hirawi and Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri and Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' has ended. Syrian Foreign Minister al-Shar' made the following statement:

[Begin recording] [al-Shar'] I have conveyed a message to President Ilyas al-Hirawi from President Hafiz al-Asad. It relates to the results of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's visit to the region and to developments in the peace process.

[Unidentified correspondent] Is there anything new?

[Al-Shar'] What is new is that we have reached a framework of understanding on the basis of which the chiefs of staff of both countries will meet in Washington at the end of this month to implement these principles.

[Correspondent] Is there a chance of achieving peace on the Syrian-Israeli track this year?

[Al-Shar'] We hope so but there are still major difficulties in the way. The contradictory Israeli stances call for little optimism. Some of the [Israeli] statements are positive while others negate the positive and give a pessimistic impression. But Syria is committed to the peace process and will do all it can to advance it. From this perspective we hope the forthcoming meetings between the two chiefs of staff in Washington will produce tangible results. The next meeting will be a touchstone testing the Israeli intentions so that the peace process can move forward.

[Correspondent] Regarding the Lebanese track, do you think negotiations there will be activated?

[Al-Shar'] Naturally, as we have said before, the Syrian and Lebanese tracks run in tandem; they are linked. Any positive progress on the Syrian track will positively reflect on the Lebanese track. In view of the deep and fraternal ties between Lebanon and Syria, we must remind you that Syria considers withdrawal from south Lebanon to be no less important to Syria than withdrawal from the Golan. Consequently, Syria cannot imagine a comprehensive peace without total withdrawal from the Golan and south Lebanon.

[Correspondent] [Words indistinct]

[Al-Shar'] What is new is the mechanism worked out to implement the agreement reached regarding the principles of the security arrangements and the meeting of the military officials in Washington.

[Correspondent] How would you describe the latest statement about partial withdrawal in return for normalization?

[Al-Shar'] We adhere to complete withdrawal from the Golan and south Lebanon. Any talk of symbolic withdrawal is unacceptable to us. Even if symbolic withdrawal from the Golan did take place according to an agreed upon timetable it would not interest us. What concerns Syria is complete withdrawal to the 4 June borders. [end recording]

Further on al-Shar' Remarks

JN1506061295 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0415 GMT 15 Jun 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' returned to Damascus yesterday evening following a short visit to Beirut, during which he conveyed a message from President Hafiz al-Asad to his brother, President Ilyas al-Hirawi. Al-Shar' was seen off at the Syrian-Lebanese border post by Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz and senior Foreign Ministry officials.

Speaking to journalists following his meeting with President al-Hirawi, al-Shar' said there are great difficulties in the path of the peace process. The contradictory Israeli stands call for little optimism. Some Israeli statements are positive, while others negate what is positive and give a pessimistic impression. But Syria is committed to the peace process and will do all it can to advance it. From this perspective, we hope the forthcoming meeting of the two chiefs of staff in Washington will produce tangible results. The upcoming meeting will be a touchstone for Israel's intentions so that the peace process can move forward.

Al-Shar' stressed that the Syrian and Lebanese tracks go hand in hand, and that any progress on the Syrian track

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will reflect positively on the Lebanese track. He added that Syria considers withdrawal from south Lebanon to be no less important for it than withdrawal from the Golan.

Answering another question, al-Shar' said: We adhere to full withdrawal from the Golan and southern Lebanon. Any talk of symbolic withdrawal is unacceptable to us. Even if symbolic withdrawal from the Golan did take place according to an agreed-upon timetable, it would not interest us at all. What concerns Syria is a complete withdrawal to the 4 June 1967 borderline.

U.S. Urges Signing of Counterterrorism Agreements

NC1506091695 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0900 GMT 15 Jun 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The United States today urged Lebanon to sign international counterterrorism agreements.

Robert Pelletreau, assistant U.S. secretary for Near Eastern affairs, told correspondents that he made this request during the talks he held today with Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri. He reiterated U.S. support for Lebanon's independence and sovereignty over its territory.

After briefing Birri on U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's recent tour of the region, Pelletreau praised the Chamber of Deputies' important political, social, and economic role.

Buwayz, Ireland's Spring Comment on Peace Talks

NC1406132195 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1115 GMT 14 Jun 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Irish Foreign Minister Dick Spring's talks at the Lebanese Foreign Ministry have focused on ways to boost the peace process. He said he hopes to see a full Israeli withdrawal from south Lebanon and that there will other new developments in the peace operation.

Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz has revealed that Ireland will appoint an ambassador to Lebanon. Our correspondent Jinan Kharrat reports from the Foreign Ministry:

[Begin recording] [Kharrat] Lebanese-Irish relations, ways of promoting them, the Irish troops' role within the UN Interim Force in Lebanon [UNIFIL], and current peace developments were the issues that were discussed at Bustrus Palace by Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz and his Irish counterpart Dick Spring. After a one-hour meeting, the two ministers held a joint news conference. Buwayz stressed the important role played by UNIFIL's Irish contingent and briefed the Irish delegation on the situation in the south. He reported that Ireland will appoint a non-resident ambassador to Lebanon, noting they had discussed the reopening of the Irish Embassy in Beirut.

[Buwayz] We held a round of talks with the Irish delegation led by his excellency the Irish foreign minister. We discussed the regional situation, his excellency the minister's current Middle East tour, and the role that Ireland is trying to play. We also discussed Ireland's UNIFIL role, particularly in view of the fact that Lebanon has stressed how important this role is, now and in the future. We reviewed our bilateral ties and how they can be promoted in the spheres of economic and cultural cooperation.

[Kharrat] Irish Foreign Minister Dick Spring said he hopes that there will be fresh developments in the peace process and that new conditions of coexistence between the Arabs and the Israelis will be reached. Spring affirmed that Ireland backs UN Security Council Resolution 425 and hoped that there will be a full Israeli withdrawal from the south. He also expressed the hope that UNIFIL's Irish contingent will continue to play its role. Diplomatic sources said that the Irish foreign minister extended an invitation to Minister Buwayz to visit Ireland, and he accepted it. [end recording]

The Irish foreign minister left the Foreign Ministry for B'abda Palace, where he was received by President Ilyas al-Hirawi. Our correspondent Yazbik Wahbah reports from there:

[Begin Wahbah recording] President Ilyas al-Hirawi met with Irish Foreign Minister Dick Spring in B'abda Palace at noon today. Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz also attended the meeting. Spring said after the meeting that he was pleased with his meeting with President al-Hirawi, noting that they discussed fresh developments, bilateral ties, and the likely future course of the current peace negotiations. He reported that President al-Hirawi told him that he visited Ireland 20 years ago and hopes to visit it again. Spring said he extended an invitation to the president to visit Ireland. He added that they exchanged views on Ireland's relationship with Lebanon, the Middle East, and the EU and ways of promoting this relationship. [end recording]

On his arrival at Beirut airport earlier today, Spring declared that his country backs the implementation of Resolution 425. Minister Buwayz, who received him at the airport, praised the role played by UNIFIL's Irish contingent.

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Junblatt on New Government, Domestic Issues, Peace

JN1406194195 London AL-WASAT in Arabic 12-18 Jun pp 13-15

[Interview with Walid Junblatt, Progressive Socialist Party leader and minister of refugee affairs, in Beirut by Ghassan Sharbal; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Sharbal] You seem to be comfortable in the new government?

[Junblatt] We are shouldering all our responsibilities—all the administrative and social responsibilities—more than any time in the past. Therefore, no mistakes should be made. This government consists of a number of millionaires who should forget their accounts abroad and take care of the social situation, otherwise the government will be in danger.

[Sharbal] Your relations with Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri are good.

[Junblatt] Yes, they are good. They are not only personal relations, but personal and political relations.

[Sharbal] How do you assess the premiership's performance?

[Junblatt] It is not a matter of performance, but reconsideration of priorities. An opportunity is available, and the public opinion will not have mercy on us. The citizen has not felt any improvement in his income, inflation is very high, and supervision of prices is nil. Good steps have been made such as the popular markets, but what is needed is more than this. There is the problem of the salaries of university and school teachers, and there is the housing and agricultural problems.

[Sharbal] Prime Minister al-Hariri has a large share in the new government. Do you consider this a political miscalculation?

[Junblatt] I do not say it is a miscalculation, but the political representation could have been diversified. Political life is not only promises to build a government hospital or a sports center, and the introduction of cellular phones. The most important thing is how to tackle the social situation, specifically increasing salaries, carrying out administrative reform, cutting down military expenses, and reconsidering the taxation policy. [passage omitted]

[Sharbal] Cutting military spending means reducing the spending of security organs?

[Junblatt] Yes, we cannot go on with this size of armed forces, security and intelligence organs. There are around 200 officers with the rank of brigadier general in the Lebanese Army. A law should be introduced to allow officers to retire at the age of 45 in order to search for new opportunities at that age. Now we allow them to retire at the age of 60 and the officers are promoted to the rank of brigadier general with all the burden this will entail. We do not need such a large number of brigadier generals.

[Sharbal] Are you worried about public liberties in view of the rising role of [security] organs and talk about arrests?

[Junblatt] There is concern over the existence of many organs, the corruption in these organs, and the lack of any terms of reference that unify and regulate these organs. [passage omitted]

[Sharbal] Some people say that the Shiites are repeating the mistakes of the Maronites. This means that the new majority is committing the same mistakes as the previous majority.

[Junblatt] You cannot say that the Shiites are repeating the Maronites' mistake, but there is a mistake in the selection of representatives of the Shiite community. The Shiite community at present is witnessing a political, cultural, and scientific resurrection, but there are attempts to return the Shiites to the days of Ahmad al-As'ad [a former Shiite leader]. This is a mistake and a serious crime against the Shiite community.

[Sharbal] In your view, is peace near?

[Junblatt] Whether it is near or far, the question is what will happen after peace? This is the big question that we should ask ourselves. The subject is not a mere signing of a certain paper or a treaty on withdrawal from the Golan or southern Lebanon, but what will happen later.

[Sharbal] Do you mean fear from peace and the Israeli economic offensive?

[Junblatt] I am not afraid of the Israeli economic offensive because the Lebanese is like the Jew. If there is a heritage with deep roots in Lebanon, it is the Phoenician heritage. The Phoenicians are the cousins of the Jews. When Solomon built the temple, he brought the cedar wood from the Phoenicians here. The question is not a financial one, it is one of politics and civilization, and it is a question of the new-old subject of the identity and dream of Israel and Zionists to fragment the region.

[Sharbal] This means that you are still afraid of Lebanon's fragmentation?

[Junblatt] The fragmentation of the region and not only Lebanon. [passage omitted]

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TV Cites Rabin's Denial of 'Secret Talks'

JN1406184695 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 14 Jun 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin has once again denied that secret talks are under way between Syria and Israel. For his part, Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres has reiterated that the Golan is Syrian territory and that no one can deny this. He said that facts should be faced honestly.

Rabin Urged To 'Stop Playing With Words'

JN1406201495 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1805 GMT 14 Jun 95

[From the "Behind the News" feature by Yusuf Maqdisi; read by Raja Farzali]

[FBIS Translated Text] Good evening gentlemen: Since the announcement on military negotiations between the Syrian and Israeli chiefs of staff under U.S. auspices in Washington on 27 June, there has been a flood of statements by the Labor and Likud leaders. It is as if the peace process has turned into an elections auction in Israel — an auction in which accusations and bargaining conflict with each other.

Those who follow these statements draw the conclusion that the objective of the more extremist elements in Israel is to create a clamor concerning the progress that has been achieved, and to abort it.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin repeated his idea that the withdrawal from the Golan will be limited and symbolic in the first stage, and will then be followed by full normalization of relations.

Israeli President Ezer Weizman said Israel is ready to withdraw from the Golan to the international borders. On his part, Shim'on Peres said: The Golan is Syrian territory and we cannot stay on the land of others when peace is established. Likud leader Benyamin Netanyahu said the withdrawal from the Golan means war, and if he assumes power, peace with Syria will not be realized unless Syria agrees to forget the Golan.

The Israeli statements do not stop. Thus far, the Rabin government has not relinquished its hesitation and clearly announces that peace with Syria and Lebanon will not be realized without its full withdrawal from the Golan to the 4 June 1967 borders and from southern Lebanon.

The Rabin government and the Likud are well aware that Syria will not agree to bargain over an inch of land because the right cannot be bargained over, and because it is based on international resolutions and the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of others' land whatever the pretexts used by those who occupied others' land by force.

It is noteworthy that the different and conflicting Israeli statements have an objective that is far beyond the Israeli internal struggle. This objective is an attempt to influence the other side and show that it is facing two options — an extremist option which adheres to occupation, and another less extreme option which bargains to get part of the land it occupies under weak pretexts, such as security, normalization, and testing trustworthiness.

This Israeli game no longer deceives anybody. It will not decieve anybody who frankly shows that to him, peace is a strategic option, that peace cannot be divided, and that the restoration of all the occupied territories in the Golan and southern Lebanon is a major factor of just and comprehensive peace. If Rabin's government is serious about peace, it should declare its acceptance of the land-for-peace principle and stop playing with words about the depth or extent of withdrawal or the international borders and the like. Such statements are aimed at circumventing the principle of withdrawal to the 4 June, 1967 borders.

A true desire for peace requires the removal of obstacles from the road to peace rather than planting obstacles and thorns. Those who say that the abandonment of the Golan means war, will not be heard by anybody because they are overwhelmed by the illusions of Greater Israel, and because they believe they can stick to occupation forever, like all the arch leaders of colonialism, who existed throughout the ages without benefiting from the experiences of history.

The abandonment of the Golan and southern Lebanon will bring about peace rather than war. Those who claim that the return of right to its owners will lead to war, are trying to reverse facts, belittle people's minds, and ridicule international resolutions and charters, the U.S. initiative, former President George Bush's statement that geography will not achieve security, and U.S. President Clinton's statement that the security of any party should not be at the expense of other parties.

The progress achieved on the Syrian track will have no value unless it is followed by progress in the overall elements of peace away from all maneuvers and oneupmanship which have nothing to do with those who seriously decide that their strategic option is just and comprehensive peace, and which contradicts all forms of occupation and attempts to make gains at the expense of others. Will Israel show any sign confirming this reality?

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Radio: Israel 'Must Reaffirm' Peace Requirements

JN1406134795 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 14 Jun 95

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: Achieving a just and comprehensive peace in the region is undeniably the responsibility of the entire international community. Therefore, efforts should be geared toward implementing UN resolutions and fulfilling the will of international legitimacy.

Syria has repeatedly asserted its adherence to a just and comprehensive peace and said it will continue to work to achieve it. This peace can only be achieved by implementing UN resolutions, ending occupation, and ensuring everybody's rights and security. Actions and serious moves on the ground determine progress in the peace process. Other than that, peace will remain liable to retreat and collapse.

Stemming from this, Syria has responded to U.S. and other international efforts that are based on the land-for-peace principle and the implementation of the Security Council resolutions that govern the peace process.

Syria has emphasized that each party should get its rights to ensure everybody's security. However, the security of one party should not be achieved at the expense of any other party. The agreement on a framework for security arrangements between Syria and Israel is a foundation that will help the military officials in their Washington meeting on 27 June, under the auspices of the United States. The talks seek to arrive at practical arrangements that ensure balance [al-tawazun] and equality [al-musawah] in the security of the two sides. Therefore, the success of the military officials in Washington will constitute a helping factor to advance the peace process.

Based on this, Syria is still committed to achieving a just and comprehensive peace on the basis of implementing Resolutions 242, 338, and 425, that is, the return of the Golan and southern Lebanon to the 4 June 1967 lines. What is being said about trial periods to test Syria's intentions or partial and phased withdrawals does not serve the peace process. In fact, it further complicates this process.

Israel must dot the i's and reaffirm the constants and requirements of peace, primarily withdrawal from the occupied territory, if it is sincerely seeking to achieve peace in the Middle East on firm and permanent foundations.

U.S. Efforts Seen Helping To Break Peace 'Deadlock'

JN1506063795 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0450 GMT 15 Jun 95

[From the press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] In its commentary, AL-BA'TH says: Thanks to Syria's support, the U.S. Administration's efforts have succeeded in breaking the deadlock in the peace process. Thus, negotiations on the Syrian-Israeli track will resume in Washington on 27 June. It is now necessary, therefore, that Israel should be committed in words and deeds to a positive role in order to make the negotiations succeed.

The paper says the resumption of negotiations is not an end, but a means to achieve peace. To render these negotiations a success, therefore, an atmosphere of confidence must be provided, stemming from the commitment of Israeli officials to their statements and stands, primarily that the Golan must return in full to Syria without any conditions.

The paper stresses that the return of land and rights in full is the only condition for this peace. AL-BA'TH points out that the so-called extremist rightists in Israel will seek to sabotage any efforts to make the peace process succeed. However, this does not change the fact that peace can only be achieved within the context of the foundations set for it, namely, the Security Council resolutions and international legitimacy.

AL-BA'TH concludes: The upcoming Washington meeting, as Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' said yesterday, is the real touchstone for the Israeli position. The meeting will clearly reveal the position of the Rabin government. If it truly wants peace, then the negotiations will proceed on track. Otherwise, everything will be likely to collapse.

AL-THAWRAH asserts in its commentary that peace is an indivisible whole whose essence lies in full Israeli withdrawal and recognition of the legitimate rights of each Arab side to its sovereignty over its territory in accordance with national and pan-Arab constants.

The paper warns against maneuvering about full withdrawal, saying: Syria has warned of the failure of attempts to place the cart in front of the horse and trying to reach results without building on sound preludes.

AL-THAWRAH adds: The security arrangements are a sound prelude that must be accurately implemented. These arrangements ensure balance [tawazun], equitability [takafu'], and equality [tasawi]. Withdrawal to the 4 June 1967 line will remain a more important and

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major step without which it is difficult to talk about real progress in the peace process.

The paper asserts that retuning the land and rights in full and the return of our people in the Golan to their normal life on their soil after its return to the motherland is what preoccupies Syria, which aspires for peace in accordance with the conviction of its people and the views of its leader, President Hafiz al-Asad. President al-Asad has laid the foundations of a just and comprehensive peace and emphasized the formula of the solution, stemming from national and pan-Arab principles that are embraced by the masses of the people and the nation, which aspire to restore land and rights, preserve dignity, and achieve a prosperous, and stable future.

Al-Asad Reportedly Considering Cabinet Reshuffle

JN1506111495 Dubayy AL-BAYAN in Arabic 13 Jun 95 p 1

[Report by Yusuf al-Bujayrami in Damascus]

[FBIS Translated Text] Syrian quarters are poised for the formation of a new government that will succeed [Prime Minister] Mahmud al-Zubi's current government. Informed sources in Damascus attribute the reshuffle to a personal desire on the part of Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad to have a highly efficient technocratic government that can respond to changes in the region in general, and in the Syrian arena in particular. These changes are primarily linked to a possible breakthrough on the Syrian-Israeli track.

The al-Zu'bi government has been in office for 10 years. The most likely candidates to form a new government are Dr. Muhammad al-'Imadi, who is currently minister of economy and foreign trade; and Lieutenant General Hikmat al-Shihabi, the current chief of staff. The sources said the new government will include several women.

Paper Reports Investment Projects Licensed

JN1406102095 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0750 GMT 14 Jun 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Damascus, 14 Jun (SANA) — The newspaper AL-BA'TH has said that the projects licensed under Investment Law No. 10 have amounted to 1,295 projects with a total value of 237 billion Syrian pounds.

Those projects provide 89,408 job opportunities. The transportation field ranks first with 687 projects, followed by industrial projects, which number 566. Agricultural projects amount to 20 projects only.

Electricity Authority Moves To Resolve Power Crisis

JN1206112895 Damascus AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 27 May 95 p 2

[FBIS Translated Text] Damascus Rural Area — The State Company for Electricity in the Damascus Rural Area Governorate has taken practical measures to resolve the electricity crisis in al-Yunusiyah quarter. This quarter is known for consuming too much electrical power unlawfully and haphazardly, thereby constituting a heavy burden and causing serious damage to the national grid. Thus, the company has erected two new transformer plants and wooden poles, laid cables for a low tension network, and set up new distribution panels prior to supplying all homes with regular electrometers.

The company has set up mobile service bureaus to serve the quarter's population of 10,000. Beginning today and until 8 June, these bureaus will resolve any problems and directly supply citizens with electrometers.

The company has asked the residents to cooperate by submitting their applications for electrometers and thus guaranteeing their own safety. The company warned that legal measures will be taken against any defaulters who fail to apply by the end of the aforementioned period.

The company has previously carried out a similar campaign to deal with violations of the national grid in areas such as Qudsiya and al-Dukhkhaniyah quarters. The campaign has had a positive effect on the national grid in the Damascus Rural Area Governorate.

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Afghanistan

Talks Held in Jalalabad With Jehadi Leaders

Rabbani Officials Arrive

LD1306192895 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 13 Jun 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Two officials of the Kabul administration have arrived in Jalalabad to hold talks with some jehadi leaders. A Radio Message of Freedom correspondent reports that the two officials, Mohammad Yunus Qanuni, so-called deputy minister of defense, and Engineer Ahmad Shah Ahmadzai, assistant to Sayaf, will submit some proposals to the meeting of the jehadi leaders in Nangrahar. It has not been learned which side they are going to hold talks with.

Group Leaders View National Situation

LD1406222195 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 14 Jun 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In yesterday's meeting of jehadi leaders in Jalalabad it was said that the Kabul administration does not want to attend the meeting of the jehadi leaders in Nangrahar. A Radio Message of Freedom correspondent reports from Jalalabad that the meeting attended by brother Hekmatyar, amir of Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party], esteemed Sebghatollah Mojaddedi, president of the High Coordination Council and leader of National Liberation Front, members of the Nangrahar Jehadi Council and representatives of jehadi organizations discussed the current situation of the country. The report adds that the meeting concluded that Rabbani does not want to attend a meeting of the jehadi leaders which was due to be held recently.

Taleban Leadership Differs Over Government Truce

LD1406151695 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 14 Jun 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Differences have arisen in the Taleban leadership about the truce with the Kabul administration. The Taleban have realized that they have made a great mistake, because they claimed that they wanted to restore a comprehensive peace and security and to carry out a universal disarmament in the country. While it seemed that this could have happened, they started talks with the leaders of the Kabul administration who are the actual cause of the current crisis in the country. Their talks with the Kabul administration have made their claims questionable.

Last night Mulla Khayrollah, a spokesman of the Taleban, told the Pashto section of the BBC that the Kabul administration never stand by its words. He said: We signed a cease-fire with the Kabul administration in order to execute the exchange of prisoners but now this agreement has been violated by the Kabul administration. He said the Kabul administration warplanes bombed the Taleban positions in Delaram, south west of Afghanistan. An exchange of fire has also been reported in the west of Kabul between them. Mulla Khayrollah said that about 70 supporters of [Ettehad-e Eslami leader] Sayyaf have defected to the Taleban in the west of Kabul.

Government Reportedly Captures 800 of Dostam's Men

LD1406105395 Tehran IRNA in English 0943 GMT 14 Jun 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kabul, June 14, IRNA — Armed conflict between Afghan forces and the National Islamic Movement of Afghanistan, led by General Abdol' Rashid Dostam in Jozjan province, has been intensified, Afghan Defence Ministry announced here Tuesday [13 June].

Some 800 forces loyal to General Dostam have been captured by government forces of Afghan President Borhanoddin Rabbani and 100 heads of horses as well as a large amount of light and heavy weapons have been seized, it added.

According to the report, government forces also occupied parts of the city of Kouhestanat as the conflict continues for the complete occupation of the region.

Government forces, following establishment of a cease-fire with Taleban group and preparation of peace negotiations with jihadi parties stationed in southern Afghanistan, have strengthened their positions.

An official in rabbani government had previously announced that General Dostam should have submitted himself to the state forces, otherwise war would be the only solution.

Islamic Army Forces Capture Militia Positions

LD1406184395 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 14 Jun 95

[FBIS Translated Text] As many as 13 militia positions have been captured in Baghlan and Bamian Provinces. A source at the Ministry of Defense told BAKHTAR that 10 security posts of the enemy were captured during today's successful operation by the Islamic army forces and mojahedin mounted in the direction of Bamian. As a result of the successful operation, weapons belonging

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to the enemy have been captured, and the bodies of their dead men were left in the battlefield.

The Islamic army and mojahedin have also captured three fortified strategic militia positions in Larkhab in Baghlan Province. According to Major General Abdol Hay Haqjo, the strategic positions in Alakamar include the captured positions.

Heavy fighting has taken place in the northern part of the country also, and the mojahedin have resolutely defeated the Dostam militia in four points. The Islamic army forces told a BAKHTAR military correspondent that a general in Dostam's forces was captured while vast areas in Sangcharak district in Jowzjan Province were being cleared up; two other generals and dozens of militia were killed. During a successful operation, which was conducted last night in Sangcharak, General Gholam Hazrat was taken prisoner along with his four men. Brigadier General Khodaidad and Brigadier General Saiforrahman and dozens of militia were killed. The Islamic army forces captured villages of Dehak, [word indistinct], Kaftarkhana in Sangcharak. Thirty other militia were captured by the mojahedin of the 26th Division. The mojahedin have captured as a booty two RPG's, two PK machine guns, 20 Kalashnikovs, 10 pistols, one wireless set and 10 walkie-talkies. The Islamic army forces are advancing in those areas and confirm the intensity of fighting.

According to another report, many attacks by the Dostam militia have been foiled in Konduz Province. The militia attacked five times Aliabad area in Konduz Province over the past two nights; they were repulsed every time with heavy loss of life. The Islamic army units based in Aliabad district killed 18 militia and one of their commanders, Brigadier General Habib, who was under the general command of Rasul Pahlawan; and 10 others were taken prisoner. Two tanks of the militia were destroyed and their three positions were eliminated in the operation.

Commander Malek Salangi, associated with Sufi Painda, and four militia of Dostam were killed in Khenjan district last night. This incident took place when the Dostam militia's three positions were captured. One of the positions is called Alakamar; its capture is threatening Doshi-Khenjan road. The report adds that the relations between Sufi Painda, an associate of Hekmatyar, and the Dostam militia became tense recently, and clashes have taken place between them. Hence, either side refuses to go to the fron lines.

India

Reportage of Official's Postponed Visit to U.S.

'Sources' Cite 'Lack of Faith'

BK1406112995 Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English 11 Jun 95 p 1

[FBIS Transcribed Text] New Delhi, June 10: India's developing cooperation with the United States in defence and security has taken a controversial turn with the postponement of the visit of the defence secretary, Mr K.A. Nambiar, to Washington later this month for high-level talks.

The decision to call off the much talked about negotiations is believed to have been taken by the Prime Minister, Mr P.V. Narasimha Rao, who is also the defence minister. The Indian decision, rather hard and capable of sending wrong political signals, has obviously been precipitated by the US position lately taken on transfer of technology to this country.

Highly placed official sources reckon the latest American position on the subject betrays a lack of faith in the commitment to the spirit of the agreement reached between the two countries during the visit of the US defence secretary, Mr William Perry, here in January. A document known as "agreed minute" accorded equal priorities to cooperation in three areas, including transfer of technology and establishment of facilities for joint production in India.

India has since carried out all its obligations to encourage and strengthen building an institutional framework. As late as last month, a full-scale naval exercise where the US navy deployed a nuclear submarine was carried out in the Arabian Sea. The armies of the two countries are right now engaged in a high altitude operational exercise.

It is now becoming apparent that the US is again trying to revert to its known familiar policy of equating India with Pakistan. India had proceeded on the assumption that the old Cold War vintage baggage in US policy had been abandoned and Washington was interested in forging a relationship with India on the basis of new realities.

The first discordant note was sounded by Mr Perry himself while addressing the Asiatic Society in New York soon after his return from India. It was treated in New Delhi as a passing remark since the Pentagon and the state of Vermont went ahead with preparing the schedule for Mr Nambiar's visit, the first visit by an Indian defence secretary to Washington since 1962.

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Mr Nambiar was due to have talks with the assistant secretary of defence, Mr Joseph Bye.

Even risking its political implications, the decision to call off the visit was taken on Friday [9 June] after carefully considering the statement made by the under secretary for defence policy, Mr Walter Slocombe. He told the Asiatic Society in Washington this week that the US security cooperation with India was not an euphemism for largescale arms sales or joint defence research, development and production. The statement is seen here as a blunt partisan interpretation of the minute of agreement which provides the basis of cooperation in defence and security between the two countries. The situation was compounded by Mr Slocombe's explanation that Mr Perry's visit to the subcontinent had laid the basis of sustained US defence engagement in both India and Pakistan.

Lately, the US has been giving clear indications about acceptance of Pakistan as a frontline nation to fight fundamentalism. It is apparent that the US would prefer to confine its cooperation in defence with India to certain limits, a contingency which requires a cool review of the relevance of the agreement to India's larger interest. The postponement of Mr Nambiar's visit is likely to heighten the debate on the latest controversial turn in Indo-US relations.

Official: Dates 'Still Being Worked Out'

BK1406140995 Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 14 Jun 95 p 9

[FBIS Transcribed Text] New Delhi, Jun 13 — Defence secretary K.A. Nambiar's scheduled visit to the United States to attend the first meeting of a US-India joint policy group has inexplicably been called off a little over a week before his departure to Washington.

A defence ministry spokesman, however, said that mutually convenient dates were still being worked out. "As of now we do not know when the defence secretary will visit the United States. But the visit will definitely not be this month," he said.

When contacted, a US embassy spokesman here said that the visit had been postponed at the Indian government's request. "I have no further information but I think it will be rescheduled," he said.

Mr Nambiar's first visit to the US was to be a follow-up of US defence secretary William Perry's visit to New Delhi in January during which the two sides signed an agreed minute seeking to enhance the level of bilateral defence cooperation. The defence agreement envisioned closer ties at the level of civilian defence leadership, between the uniformed services, and in the field of defence production and research. The civilian-to-civilian group, to be co-chaired by the Indian defence secretary and the US assistant secretary of defence, was meant to provide overall guidance to the other two elements.

The news of Mr Nambiar's visit to the US had first emanated from Washington earlier this month. Visiting US Navy Fleet Commander-in- Chief Admiral Ronald Zlatoper had confirmed it as recently as June 7 while talking to journalists here.

Defence ministry sources said that Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao had ordered postponement of the defence secretary's visit. The file with proposed dates and complete programme had been put up for approval of the Prime Minister who also holds the defence portfolio. "The Prime Ministry did not approve of the visit taking place this month," said a senior defence ministry official, adding that the external affairs ministry had formally conveyed the defence secretary's inability to visit Washington to the US government.

Last Wednesday [7 June] US under-secretary of defence Walter Slocombe was quoted as saying that arms and technology transfer would not form part of Indo-US defence cooperation in the immediate future. Besides this, Indian defence officials have also taken note of the fact that the US has been actively engaged in reviving defence relations with Pakistan.

While pointing to the timing of Mr Slocombe's remark, defence officials here say that the US official's statement differs from the agreement on cooperation in defence research and production. "Paragraph six of the agreed minute states that defence research and production will also be an integral part of our bilateral defence relationship. The existing technical and production cooperation activities, such as cooperation in India's Light Combat Aircraft programme, have been encouraging and will be continued....," said one senior defence ministry official who declined to be quoted by name.

As for the revival of defence relations between the US and Pakistan, the US-Pak consultative group met after a gap of almost five years in the last week of May. And Pakistan is reported to have gained assurances that the US will not supply to India arms or advanced defence technologies that could after the military balance in the region.

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Article Cites U.S. 'Farce' Regarding Security

BK1406074095 Delhi DAINIK JAGRAN in Hindi 10 June 95 p 6

[Article by Chintamani Mahapatra: "The U.S. Farce Concerning Indian Security"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Before the recently concluded nuclear nonproliferation treaty [NPT] review conference, Washington showed some consideration for the Indian viewpoint regarding the nonproliferation issue and suggested some measures to solve the nuclear problems in this region. However, publicly the U.S. officials continued to harp on giving priority to India's membership in NPT. They also held talks with their Indian counterparts to resolve the nuclear disputes in the South Asian region.

They also gave the impression that they had a better appreciation for Indian concerns about Chinese nuclear capabilities. The U.S. State Department, the Pentagon, and other experts were also of the opinion that without China's participation in the regional nonproliferation arrangement the problem could not be permanently resolved.

Nevertheless, after granting indefinite extension of the NPT and legitimizing China's possession of the nuclear weapons like that of other nuclear powers, now it will be very difficult to make Beijing come to the negotiating table unless all the nuclear powers adopt similar measures voluntarily in their respective regions. The bitter truth is that it was China that conducted the nuclear test almost immediately after the indefinite NPT extension. Barring raising an innocuous protest and exerting nominal pressure on China, no country can do anything in the matter. Now the latest information reveals that China is soon going to conduct the test-firing of its new intercontinental ballistic missiles, which are said to be capable of hitting any target, even in the United States or the Western European coastline.

Now, what is the U.S. record in these matters? What is especially interesting in this context is the fact that after blowing their horn to celebrate their success at the NPT review conference, the policy planners in Washington are now seriously considering lifting the sanctions imposed on Pakistan under the Pressler Amendment after making suitable changes in the law. The sanctions were imposed on Pakistan in 1990 due to its continuing nuclear weapons program, and this lone measure seems to have effectively checked the nuclear proliferation in the region. However, the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee has affected changes in the law to resume economic aid to Pakistan.

Had Pakistan forsaken its idea to make nuclear weapons, there would have been sense in changing the law, but unfortunately, this is not the case. The father of Pakistan's nuclear weapons program, Abdul Qadir Khan, during the course of an interview he gave to a Pakistani daily, proudly asserted that neither the pace of the program had been slowed nor had it been stopped. It is said that he stressed emphatically that "our president, prime minister, and foreign minister have repeatedly declared that our program has not been stopped" and added "we must believe them, for all these three cannot lie to the nation."

Then, why is the United States so lenient with Pakistan? Perhaps the policy planners of the United States do not favor the continued enforcement of those restrictions on Pakistan that have even otherwise failed to prevent Pakistan from acquiring nuclear capability. These policy planners always reckon Pakistan to be an obedient and trusted ally. In other words, it can be said that now all those arguments that were always advanced to justify U.S. relations with China are being used again to justify Washington's policy toward Pakistan, which is now endowed with the nuclear capability. The standard plea is that it is better to keep Pakistan involved than let it remain aloof and isolated.

If we are happy that the United States did not give F-16 bombers to Pakistan, we are making a mistake. Pakistan has already acquired the capability to manufacture nuclear weapons and some F-16 bombers along with their projectile system. The U.S. Congress has also received proposals that sooner or later the advance money received from Pakistan should be returned to it. Besides, with the restrictions lifted, Pakistan would gradually start receiving U.S. financial aid, which will enable it to invest more in the nuclear program.

Our external affairs minister recently visited the United States where he was, perhaps, given the assurance once again that Washington deemed the Kashmir issue to be a purely bilateral matter that should be resolved under the Simla Accord. The old record in the matter indicates that the influential U.S. experts had already expressed their apprehension concerning the Kashmir issue, which could lead to a nuclear war in the subcontinent. Considering these factors, such assurances are not to be relied upon immediately and in total faith.

Should the need arise, the United States would definitely pressure India to make it settle its nuclear dispute with Pakistan, especially at a time when Pakistan is eminently succeeding in causing disruptive activities in Kashmir. The news items regarding U.S. refusal to allow supplies to India to ensure security for its nuclear energy plants indicate that the United States is exerting indirect

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pressure on India on nuclear matters. All told, there is no option for us but to acquire self-reliance in these matters.

Daily Addresses Military Exercises With U.S.

BK1406155495 Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English 11 Jun 95 p 6

[FBIS Transcribed Text] New Delhi, June 10 — For the first time, special forces of the Indian and United States Armies have started a three-week long joint exercise to expand strategic cooperation.

The exercise of the Armies, which began from Monday [5 June], is being held near Paonta Sahib and Dak Pathar on the Dehra Dun-Nathan axis.

Indian special forces, involving paracommandos, are represented by five officers and 27 members from other ranks, while one officer and nine soldiers from other ranks are representing the US Army.

The Indian special forces, with its head-quarters at Nahan, has been raised recently and comprises all three units of the Army paracommandos.

The exercise, to continue till June 27, is being considered significant as it is part of the "close coordination" the two sides plan to work under. The US ambassador, Mr Frank Wisner, also visited the area to watch the exercise.

Though this is the first time that the Armies of the two countries are engaged in a joint training exercise, similar exercises have been held by Indian and US paratroopers in the past. The paratroopers' exercise held in February 1992 and October 1993 involved high altitude-high opening (HA-HO) and mid-air steering manoeuvres.

Recently, the two sides also concluded a successful naval exercise near Cochin involving nuclear-powered submarines.

Two Sturgeon class US attack submarines were involved in the "Malabar Two" exercises near Cochin. It also included an Indian complement of two Kilo-Class submarines of Soviet origin and two destroyers.

Indian, which has successfully operated the Soviet-built "Chakra" (transferred to New Delhi on lease by Moscow in 1988), is already familiar with the working of nuclear-powered submarines. [sentence as published]

The Sturgeon class submarines were commissioned in the US Navy in 1967. They are powered by a pressurised water cooler reactor and contain two steam turbines.

The submarines are fitted with sophisticated Harpoon missiles and the Tomahawk cruise missiles, which can hit long-distance targets. They can accommodate a crew of 107.

The advanced naval exercise also included sophisticated submarines hunting P3-C Orion planes. Detailed knowledge of the Orion's capabilities will be useful to India since Pakistan's stalled US aircraft order includes these, apart from F-16s.

Future Indo-US naval exercises might also include aircraft carriers, submarines and naval attack aircraft. The visiting US commander-in-chief of the Pacific fleet, Admiral Ronald J. Ziatoper, said the two sides had now reached fair coordination in exchange of communication and tactical information.

"We hope to expand such exercises in future to include carriers, submarines and naval attack aircraft," he said, adding that US marines and Indian naval personnel are expected to take up the exercises again next year.

The US Admiral, who held talks with the Indian chief of Naval staff, Admiral V.S. Shekhawat, also suggested a number of other areas where the two sides can cooperate. Both countries have decide to look at ways to build security in the Persian Gulf, safeguard hydrocarbon resources and study ways of participating in UN peacekeeping operations.

Washington is also exploring ways to ensure more frequent visits of its warships to Goa and Cochin from the Gulf and utilising the repair services of Indian shipyards. It is also keen to enter into an agreement with India for getting its ship repaired at the Mazagon docks and making Cochin and Goa permanent ports of call for the US Navy.

Army Accuses BBC of Using Fake Kashmir Footage

BK1406135995 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 9 Jun 95 pp 1, 9

[FBIS Transcribed Text] New Delhi — Has the British Broadcasting Corporation been deliberately using footage from the Chechnya conflict to dramatise its coverage of the Charar Sharif crisis?

The Army authorities believe that this indeed is the case concerning the telecast of certain visuals on May 12.

Piqued by the footage shown on the BBC World Service network, the Army headquarters (HQ) is understood to be taking up the matter with the concerned department in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

The Director-General, Mr John Birt's Spring cleaning of the stables at Bush House may have got that venerable British institution, the BBC, rid of a lot of old hands. It has, however, done little for its standing in India since then.

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The emerging row between the Army Headquarters and the BBC over the visual contents, not the controversial verbal message, of the coverage of the Charar Sharif crisis threatens to affect its reputation even further.

The Army HQ sources claim that the spat revolves around the footage which was telecast on May 12 during the 1.30 pm and 2.30 pm news on BBC World Service.

While on the previous day, the BBC had said that the Army burnt the shrine (it was recanted later), in these particular telecasts, the BBC used footage for the Charar story that included four shots that were not from anywhere within a thousand-mile radius of Jammu and Kashmir [J and K]!

As part of the report by a Mr Richard Galpin there is a shot of a man, unmistakably a Slav, wearing a shirt with large polka dots gesticulating before the camera. Polka dot shirts have never been seen at Charar Sharif and nor were there any reports of a Slav presence at the shrine.

The next shot is of what must have been a minaret with a metallic dome beside it. A close analysis of the shot once again proves that Jammu and Kashmir could not have been the venue for the architecture and construction which are alien to most of Asia.

It is with the third visual that the mystery becomes clear when a group of fairly cheery infantry men are riding atop a BMP armoured personnel carrier.

Close inspection of these frames suggests that they are Slav and the combat gear they wear is not that of the Indian jawans. And then, Indian troops do not have BMP's to ride atop and are certainly not cheery about Operation Rakshak in the Valley.

When the back of the BMP comes into view, it becomes clear that the shot does not belong to India and neither does the BMP. For it is a BMP-1 with the raised guard which the Indian models do not have. Also the Indian Army does not write numbers as '336' was inscribed on the BMP-I .

Following the BMP-I is an unmistakably Russian truck on a four-lane highway, the likes of which are yet to appear anywhere in India notwithstanding the fact that in mountainous J and K they would be impossible to engineer.

The last of the contentious shots is of an armed Mi-8/Mi-17 helicopter flying above what could possibly be an enormous observation tower and then in the distance, over electricity pylons.

The helicopter does not bear the Indian Air Force colours and there are no armed helicopters for the soldiers in the Kashmir Valley. Towers like that do not exist in India, even if such pylons are generic to the world.

Rao Returns From Official Visit to France

BK1506042195 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 15 Jun 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The prime minister returned home this morning after his four-day official visit to France. During the visit, Mr. Narasimha Rao had wide-ranging discussions with the French president, Mr. Jacques Chirac; the French premier, Mr. Alain Juppe; and other leaders. Both India and France have agreed to enhance bilateral trade. After one-to-one meeting yesterday, the prime ministers of the two countries said doors have been opened for establishing very close business and political ties between the two nations. Mr. Rao also briefed the French leaders about the situation in Jammu and Kashmir and the steps taken by New Delhi to restore the political process in the state. France has favored a bilateral dialogue between India and Pakistan to settle the Kashmir issue.

AIR special correspondent Harish Segon reports that the prime minister's visit has been a big success in attracting French investments to India. Several areas of economic cooperation and joint ventures have been identified. These covered power, telecommunication, automobile, and other fields. On the last day of his visit yesterday, Mr. Rao witnessed a French air show held at the [words indistinct].

*Paper Views U.S. Closure of Visa Section

95AS0392A Karachi JANG in Urdu 8 May 95 p 3

[Editorial:"Closure of Visa Section."]

[FBIS Translated Text] It was announced that non-immigrant visas would no longer be issued from the U.S. Consulate in Karachi and therefore those needing visas would have to travel to Lahore. The announcement was surprising and the Office of Trade and Industry is quite correct in pointing out that this decision would create severe difficulties and problems for businessmen and would have negative effects on trade. The reason is that Karachi is the centre of the country's commercial, industrial and financial activity. In addition to creating problems for businessmen, the closure of the visa section would have a repercussion from the humanitarian point of view. A large number of our people have relatives living in the U.S. and the visa decision will make it harder for them to visit their family members. U.S. authorities should take into consideration the unnecessary problems and hardships created by their visa decision and reconsider it.

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Iran

Rafsanjani Comments on 'Defeat' of U.S. Move

LD1506110195 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 15 Jun 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] At a meeting with the members of the Islamic Coalition Society [Jam'iyat-e Mo'talefe-he Eslami] today, President Hashemi-Rafsanjani said: The Islamic revolution of Iran, the roots of which stem from capable leadership, the struggles of the clergy and earnest forces of the revolution, and the participation of the masses of the people, is so powerful and strong that world arrogance is incapable of withstanding it. He said the defeat of the U.S. recent move against Iran testifies to that fact.

He added: In spite of world arrogance's utilization of all its political and propaganda might, the Islamic Republic of Iran continues on the path of its development and progress. The negative response by the U.S.'s closest friends to that country's plans to impose sanctions against Iran shows that despite biased propaganda the world has realized that we are strong and that the era of U.S. bullying and hegemonism is over. [passage omitted]

Majles Speaker: U.S. Embargo 'Great Mistake'

LD1406113295 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 14 Jun 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Mr. Nateq-Nuri, speaker of the Islamic Majles today addressed a gathering of the officials of seminaries and offices of Vali-e Faqih [Guardian of the Cause] and the ideological training departments of the Construction Jihad from all over the country, saying that one of the heaviest responsibilities of scholars in a society is to explain the social issues and observe piety from which future generations should benefit. The speaker of the Islamic Majles said that scholars throughout the country, and especially in the executive apparatus, should be responsible for answering people's questions and any ambiguities and that people should consider them as their bastions.

Mr. Nateq-Nuri referred to the hostile U.S. stance against Iran and said that Clinton's recent decision to impose an embargo against Iran was a great mistake. He added: As Washington has so far failed to gain a victory on imposing an economic embargo against Iran, it will not be successful in the future either.

Radio Views Clinton's Status Before G-7 Summit

LD1406152195 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 14 Jun 95

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tomorrow, Clinton will fly to Canada to attend the G-7 meeting. The diplomatic efforts of the White House for presenting the controversial U.S. plan for international embargo against Iran has fallen flat.

Clinton has consequently weakened and come under the strong pressure of his internal rivals. It appears that Clinton and the Democrat Party are in their weakest positions in recent years. On the one hand, Clinton feels impotent in the face of the revolution of the republicans, who have restricted the power of the central government by exercising domination over the House of Representatives and the Senate and, on the other hand, the White House is faced with the negative reaction of all his allies in convincing them to join economic sanctions against Iran. This state of affairs has portrayed an unfavorable picture of the weakness of U.S. political power in the international arena. In such conditions, Clinton is waiting for a miracle to show off as being a superpower in Halifax.

Experts on international affairs believe that Clinton's most important chance will in fact be when he can convince his European and Japanese counterparts that his administration is loyal to his undertakings at international scale and this is painful for the president of a country which has each time impressed the G-7 summit meetings with controversial plans.

Undoubtedly, current conditions in America arise from a number of issues. Firstly, it is the unrealistic discernment of the White House, ringleaders of the global situation, that has faced them with a problem of finding a proper theory to formulate political and economic strategies. Secondly, it is the economic war faced simultaneously by America against a front formed by Japan, China, and France and the U.S. attempt to discredit the German stand in Europe while ignoring the main U.S. ally, namely Britain, on the Irish problem. All these issues have strengthened this belief in experts all over the world that the Democrats are inexperienced statesmen.

This notion is bolstered at a time when Washington itself is faced with discrimination in carrying out its internationally undertaken commitments. Clinton and the Democrats are domestically discredited to the same extent that they have lost their credibility internationally. The verdict of the U.S. people for the Republicans in the parliamentary elections is indicative of their dissatisfaction with the promises given to them

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by the Washington administration. Now under such circumstances, Clinton is on his way to Canada. But indisputably he will not enjoy any maneuverability as a superpower. And the Americans are showing extreme anger over the fact that Clinton has lowered the state of his country to the level of second-rate government.

Report on G-7 States' Request 'To Shed Light'

LD1406191795 Tehran IRNA in English 1235 GMT 14 Jun 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, June 14, IRNA — The European countries and G-7 member states should express their views on Iran explicitly without being exposed to any outside pressure, said the morning daily 'IRAN NEWS' here Wednesday [14 June].

The English-language paper made the remark in response to request made by the said countries from to shed light on some of stands on issues such as the case of Salman Rushdie, use of atomic energy, acceptance of international rules and regulations, denouncement of terrorism and non-interference in the affiars of other nations. [sentence as received]

As for Salman Rushdie, apostate author of the blasphemous novel the Satanic Verses, the paper said that the Majles speaker, 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri and Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati have recently clarified that Iran would take no practical measure and would dispatch no commandos to carry out the death edict against Rushdie.

The Iranian officials and politicians have, in the past several months, embarked upon elaborating and expounding the stands and viewpoints of the Islamic Republic of Iran, said the paper.

Referring to the messages sent by President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani to some leaders of the world countries to elucidate the stands of Iran, the paper said that the messages explicitly and clearly declared that Iran, in tandem with its Constitution, did not intend to meddle in the domestic affairs of any country or reverse the international rules and regulations as a matter of policy.

As for terrorism, the paper said that Iran has time and again declared that it has been one of the first victims of terrorist activites and expressed readiness to cooperate with all other countries to eradicate this global problem.

Pointing to the issue of the use of atomic anergy, it argued that Tehran was adamant to make peaceful use of the energy and had never ever cherished the idea of putting atomic energy at the service of military uses and objectives.

"Now that the standpoints of the Islamic Republic of Iran have been clearly articulated, the European countries and G-7 member states should come up with the ultimate decision regardless of outside pressure. [quotation marks as received] "The Western countries should now realize that the ball is in their court," concluded the paper.

Paper Assails Alleged U.S. Support for MKO

NC1506102095 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 12 Jun 95 p 1

[Editorial: "U.S. Representatives' Support for MKO Should Be Condemned"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In a statement last week some 200 members of the U.S. House of Representatives appealed to President Bill Clinton to put pressure on Iran by supporting the terrorist Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization (MKO) in its bid to overthrow the Islamic government in Tehran.

The statement which drew angry reactions from Iranian officials showed the sheer ignorance of U.S. lawmakers about the activities of a group that has been involved in killing not only Iranians, but Iraqi Kurds, Iraqi Shiites in southern Iraq, and even Americans.

Before the 1979 Revolution MKO prided itself on killing American military attaches in Iran. When they failed miserably in their intensive efforts to topple Iran's nascent Islamic government, they planted bombs at government headquarters. The names of MKO victims in Iran would fill a book.

Finally they fled from Iran, going to Iraq, only to be hired as paid henchmen of Saddam Husayn. They have shown their loyalty to the man who waged the Mother of All Wars by invading Kuwait.

U.S. officials who urged their government to support MKO owe the American people and the world an explanation. If they did not know of the grim record of terrorism committed by MKO in Iran and Iraq, they must do their homework the next time they want to support any unknown group.

If they knew about the history of MKO's bloodbath, they have willingly and knowingly sided with the devil and nothing short of their resignation em masse should satisfy the constituency that elected them.

'Sources' Cite U.S. Support for 'Terrorist' Group

LD1406221395 Tehran IRNA in English 1306 GMT 14 Jun 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Vienna, June 14, IRNA — The terrorist Monafeqin (hypocrites) grouplet [Mojahedin-

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e Khalq Organization, MKO], which had embarked on a massive propaganda campaign for their planned (16 June) meeting in Dortmund, Germany, suffered a decisive defeat Tuesday [13 June] when the German Foreign Ministry rejected entry to Maryam Rajavi.

Rajavi, who left their camp in Iraq for France recently and has presidential illusions, was due to call in the meeting for support of U.S. embargo against Iran.

According to informed sources a total sum of dlrs 10 million has been given to the grouplet by the U.S. and Iraq for propaganda.

Meanwhile, the Iranian Embassy's public relations department in Bonn rejected Wedesnday Monafeqin claims that Iran had dispatched a high-ranking delegation to Germany aimed at convincing the officials there to refuse entry to Rajavi.

The embassy further added it had provided German officials with documents proving the grouplets terroristic activities and nature.

The grouplet, which was uprooted in Iran following its brutal terror campaign against the people and the government settled in Iraq and sided with Saddam regime during the Iraqi imposed war on Iran.

According to the German Foreign Ministry spokesman, Rajavi's presence on German soil is against Germany's international responsibilities because of Rajavi's admission and part aimed at violent overthrow of the Iranian Government.

Official Addresses Persian Gulf Issues

LD1406224195 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 14 Jun 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Interior Minister 'Ali Besharati-Jahromi, at a gathering of Iran's ambassadors to the Persian Gulf littoral states and governors general of coastal and border provinces today, stressed the need to improve and expand links and relations with the Persian Gulf littoral states.

He said: We welcome the expansion of relations with the Persian Gulf littoral states and will undertake any measure to strengthen our political and economic ties with them.

Mr. Besharati said there are no restrictions for the Persian Gulf littoral states Iranian nationals to visit Iran, and said: There are special facilities for issuing visas, passports, and identity cards for persons of Iranian origin.

Mr. Besharati added: While declaring our respect for the territorial integrity of all neighboring countries, we state that we will not allow any country to violate our territorial integrity. He said: Some fishing boats belonging to neighboring countries have been seen to engage in illegal fishing in the coastal waters of Iran. He added: We will deal with such cases severely.

'Ashura' Military Exercise To Begin 16 Jun

LD1406183195 Tehran IRNA in English 1759 GMT 14 Jun 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Ashura District, Tehran Prov., June 14, IRNA — Great 'Ashura' maneuvre is to be launched here, 70 kms from Tehran, on Friday [16 June].

Some 31 infantry and armour units from throughout Iran have been transferred here to take part at such a big maneuvre of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) ground forces.

The participants are to use real bullets in the maneuvre, during which 85,000 out of 100,000 well-prepared IRGC forces, after tactically marching 20 kms in two different phases, will control the hypothetical goal.

The artillery as well as Katyusha and mortars launchers would launch fire on the positions of the hypothetical enemy prior to the infantry and armour forces' attack on the predetermined positons.

Hundreds of tanks, cannons and multiple rocket launchers as well as armoured personnel carriers will take part in the maneuvre.

Commander in Chief of IRGC Major General Mohsen Reza'i put area, where the operations would be launched and the forces would be deployed, at 400 square kms and said the venue, where the infantry units are to be deployed, has been entitled 'Arafat' district and where the operations are to be launched the 'Neynava' district.

IRGC logistics units have initiated wide-scale efforts to provide the combatants with their requirements.

There are hundreds of tanks, heavy and light vehicles as well as personnel carriers in the area for the purpose.

Meanwhile, here Wednesday participants in the maneuvre launched a miniature training in the presence of Commander Reza'i and Iranian reporters.

Talking to IRNA, Reza'i lauded IRGC and Basiji forces for having a role in the operation.

Radio Reports on Exercise

LD1506142495 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 15 Jun 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In the huge region of Neynava, south of Tehran, everything is being prepared for

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the presence of the commander in chief of Iran's armed forces [Ayatollah Khamene'i] in the gathering of Islamic militarymen.

According to our correspondent, 100,000 forces, after taking part in the glorious ceremony of Ziarat-e Ashura exercise in the east of the parade ground formed an eight-km-long array. The C in C of the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps, Major-General Mohsen Reza'i, reviewed the march past.

In a speech at the first phase of Ashura exercise, Major-General Reza'i termed the exercise as successful, saying that the determined faces of the marching forces indicate the firm will and determination of the Muslims militarymen in preserving the dignity and honor of the Islamic ummah.

Major-General Mohsen Reza'i, following this inspection visit, pointed out weak points of the forces participating in the exercise to the commander of the parade ground.

Thursday [15 June] afternoon a parade ceremony involving the Ashura exercise forces will be held in the presence of the C in C of the armed forces. In the exercise, attended by 100,000-strong Ashura forces and being conducted over 1,400 kms, live ammunition and war materials will be used.

Brigadier-General Ahmad Sodagar, commander of the 25th Karbala Division said: Since the Second World War no country has single- handedly organized and conducted such a grand operation and most of those operations have been ceremonial.

***President's Sermon on Islamic System, Economics**

95LA0185A Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 3 Apr 95 pp 11, 12

[FBIS Translated Text] News Division—The second Friday prayers sermon in the new year in Tehran was performed in the esteemed presence of the God-seeking and ever-present people and led by Hojjat ol-Eslam Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, president of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

According to a report by our correspondents, after the statements of the minister of interior as the pre-sermon speaker, Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani, the temporary Friday imam of Tehran, delivered the Tehran Friday [31 March] prayers sermons as follows:

First Sermon

In the name of God, the compassionate, and the merciful. Thanks to the Lord of the Two Worlds and greetings to the Prophet of God and the infallible imams.

I take refuge in God from Satan and surrender to God's order for justice and generosity. [Koranic verse in Arabic]

Before starting the subject of the first sermon, I congratulate the beloved worshippers on the auspicious new year and ask God for prosperity, generosity, and progress for our proud people this year.

As you know, usually in the first sermon we discuss social justice, and last year I addressed a few particular issues in the sermons. Today I will explain for this revered audience another issue, which is an important central point of justice in the society and the efforts of the revolution in this area.

I emphasize that piety, performing religious obligations, avoiding what is prohibited, and continuing along the divine path are the important duties of each and every one of us as Muslims.

One of our important demands in the revolution and one of our serious criticisms of the monarchical system was that they had made injustice and discrimination common in our country. The revolution claimed and made it a goal to establish justice in place of such discrimination, to ensure that everyone in the society has his actual share.

Despite its brevity, this statement has very significant content and far-reaching implications. Because of lack of awareness, our people did not realize what rights of theirs had been violated and how much discrimination and injustice existed. They saw injustice in some superficial areas, but the depth of the issue includes problems that usually remained hidden from people's sight. The worst injustice was that they had destroyed the basis for progress, perfection, and advancement in many areas of the country and among a vast segment of the people of the society because they had provided essential and fundamental concerns for only a few cities and families—which was welfare—and the remainder of the people had absolutely no hope of acquiring things like education. In the past, I said what we did after the revolution and in the First Five-Year Development Plan was to pay special attention to the geographically deprived regions. A large part of our country was blanketed by deprivation, especially the villages, where the best people live, work hard, are content, and consume little. The results of their efforts were used by the affluent stratum and still are.

In the First Plan, we emphasized a great deal toward solving those problems. We dealt first with several important sectors: education, roads, health care, electricity, water, and things of this nature. If they do not exist, roads are always closed to the people's progress.

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Early this week, I made a trip that you probably heard about on radio and television. I will give you an example of the accomplishments of the First Plan. (This issue is not part of my discussion. My main topic is the issue of health.)

See what must be done in the deprived regions that is being done.

Throughout the country, wherever we saw potential in the geography and people, we went there to encourage this potential. On Saturday, the first work day of this year, I went to one of the very important factories that was the result of the First Plan and inaugurated it, but the media passed it over very simply. I will say a few words about it so that from this podium our people will become happy. We must truly speak of this as a New Year bonus.

There is a refinery there. It is not an oil refinery but something else; however, they call it a refinery.

They call it the Abadan Refinery, and I was dumbfounded at what it supposedly has to do with Abadan. It is in Bandar-e 'Abbas, exactly opposite of Abadan. Abadan is in the southwest of the country, and this is in the southeast of the country. The engineer who is the manager in charge of it said: We called it Abadan as a code for our undertaking because we consider it an operation to rival oil, and we think that if this operation is sustained, it can establish something better than oil in our country.

See what gifts we have in these deprived regions, which no one has utilized until now?

We went between Rudan and Manujan. Rudan is in Bandar-e 'Abbas, and Manujan is in the city of Kohnuj, in the province of Kerman. It is so remote an area that if you ask the students in the country to find it on the map, they will be hard pressed to do so because it is so obscure and deprived.

It is in the high mountains north of Jask and in the desert that has always been unsafe. While we were building this factory, it was so unsafe that one of the Chinese engineers who was helping us was captured by outlaws and taken hostage for several months. We only got him back a few days ago; that area was so insecure. Now, we have gone into that area and built a mine and a large refinery. Now 300 young people are working there. The same people who lived in the neighboring villages and the very deprived areas assemble there and are working for adequate pay. So why is this refinery a rival for oil? Because there is a mine there called a chromium mine which is very high in the mountains, and we must go through many twists and turns to get where there is chromium ore. About 20 million tons is the inventory of the mine, of which we are excavating 3.5 million tons. If we do nothing with the soil in the mine and just take it and transport it on ships, they will buy it from us at $110 per ton. This mine is one of the few in the world; only seven or eight countries have chromium mines, one of which is us. So far, we have had eight discovered cases, one of which is near the sea, and we are mostly utilizing it.

From every two tons of soil at the refinery they have built there, they take one ton of a product called "ferrochromium," which is an alloy for rust-proofing industries that is very much needed in metals. We just sold the first cargo to Japan at $560 per ton. See the difference? We give the soil for $110, and when it is converted to ferrochromium it is sold for $560. We have another item to make it into pure chrome, which will make the same soil worth more than $2,000 for us, and we are currently importing it. We now sell oil at nearly $100 per ton, despite all the expenditures, diggings, pipes, and large investments, but our country has capital that is spread throughout.

I was in Sistan va Baluchestan. They showed me a stone mine that was 25 km of mountain, and all of this mine is valuable stones. It is in Sistan va Baluchestan, which was also in an area that was not safe before and is now a safe and prosperous area of the country.

There are so many of the same common stones—granite and marble—that will never run out and are more expensive than oil.

The First Plan concentrated on this kind of work, which is mainly in the remote regions, deserts, mountains, and plains, and the results help the people who live around it. Such work builds the deprived region. Indeed, we have had great resources, and God curse the hand of colonialism and its agents in the country who did not allow this nation to benefit from its resources. They kept this nation illiterate, feeble, isolated, and oblivious so that they could do whatever they wished under the pretext that we have oil. At the same time, they paid such a low price to take our valuable wealth that could have been converted to expensive chemicals.

In any case, the direction of the First Plan is to go into the remote regions where there are human and natural resources and restore the rights of the people who were left so far behind.

An example is between Manujan and Rudan, which was the most remote and insecure area of the country and today is a prosperous area because we followed the premise of social justice. This is not my main discussion, however; I am supposed to talk about health.

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One of the factors most opposed to justice is lack of health services throughout the society, the fact that there is discrimination in health services, wherein a number of people enjoy all health and treatment resources and the majority of the people have no access to health and treatment.

The duty of a just government is to create conditions that ensure that from the moment a child is in his mother's womb he be under health coverage to the end of his life. The pregnant mother must have a healthy environment with health care support in order to have a healthy baby who will grow up properly and be able to make use of his God-given talents.

When there is no water, electricity, doctors, and medicine in a village, and the village has no access to a doctor, and the child is sick and illiterate, how can this child develop?

In the end, he must become a good shepherd or an good unskilled farmer to make a subsistence-level living. So, we said that the policy was to pursue educational measures and other fundamental tasks. One of the areas that we pursued was public health. I was still in the Majles when those concerned about health and treatment raised the concern that with our existing medical resources we could not extend health and treatment services to the whole country very soon. Some of the gentlemen proposed that we combine the Health Department with medical science institutions to make use of the Health Department resources to train doctors, and that proposal had opponents at the time.

In any case, we saw that we had no doctors, and we had no medicine, hospitals, health centers, and tools. The tools of health and treatment were very expensive on the world market. Planning was carried out, and today we are reaping the benefits.

You can see today what the Islamic Republic has done in this area. First, we came to the conclusion that we must train more doctors, build the necessary space, and procure the necessary tools for them. With the planning we carried out, the results have been what I am now telling you and the benefits the people will gain from now on. The last action we must take here is with regard to the issue of health insurance. I raised this issue today in order to discuss insurance with you as one of the greatest tasks of 1374 [21 March 1995-20 March 1996], so that the people hear it from me and will act on it. I will tell you about the work prior to the revolution, prior to the Plan, and after the First Plan, until 1372 [21 March 1993-20 March 1994]. Prior to the revolution, we had 12 medical science universities. Prior to the First Plan—that is, in 1368 [21 March 1989-20 March 1990]—the number reached 22 universities. Today we have 38 such universities.

The number of students in the last year prior to the revolution was 25,500, and in 1368, prior to the Plan, 62,000 students. Today, we have 102,000 medical students, not including those in the Free Islamic University. If we add them as well, the number is much greater.

Faculty, teachers, and university professors prior to the revolution numbered 1,950. In 1368, there were 3,600, and in 1372, we had 8,400 professors and teachers. With regard to dormitories for students, there were very few prior to the revolution. In 1368, 11,000 students were in dormitories; today, 35,000 students are in dormitories.

This is the educational background needed for us to train physicians, to get to a point of being able to bring resources to remote cities and villages. Physicians cannot be forced to go somewhere. If they are forced to go, they will not work. We still have a mandatory plan, but the time for it is limited, and later we will have all volunteers.

In terms of resources of hospitals, beds and equipment, prior to the revolution there were 350 hospitals; in 1368 there were 625 hospitals; and today we have 724 hospitals throughout the country. You should know that the ones that have been added are mainly in remote places and villages and areas in which no one had access to such resources.

Prior to the revolution, there were 56,000 hospital beds; prior to the Plan, there were 82,000; and by the end of 1372, the number reached 93,000 beds.

The number of physicians prior to the revolution was 14,000, most of whom left. Prior to the Plan, there were 21,500 physicians. By the end of 1372, the number had reached 37,000. Thank God we have reached a good number, and of course in the next two or three years, due to the expansion of universities, this figure will increase.

The number of physician specialists prior to the revolution was 7,000, many of whom left. Prior to the Plan, there were 11,000; today their number has reached 17,000.

Many of the remote cities today use the services of physician specialists. Prior to the revolution, sometimes a large number of foreign physicians were brought in. Prior to the Plan, we had 2,700 foreign physicians, but we are gradually dismissing them and replacing them with native doctors. We have 650 foreign doctors with whom we have prearranged replacement by our own doctors.

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During the same period of the Plan, the production of drugs has increased five-fold, which makes up a large figure. In fact, one of our exports is drugs.

Regarding the procurement of equipment, in the Plan we have spent a great deal of foreign currency on purchasing expensive medical equipment. At the present time, the advanced medical equipment that exists in our country is not found in many countries in the world and is only found in a few developed countries. Our people had the right to benefit from these resources, and we imported them.

Sophisticated medical procedures were very rarely performed before. Generally, the wealthy went abroad for crucial medical procedures. The seven-tuman foreign currency rate made it feasible for them, but today the most complex medical services are offered to the people by highly skilled physicians. Prior to the revolution, we only had one department for kidney transplant, which was in Tehran, and today we have 18 kidney transplant departments, most of which are in the provincial cities. In Iran now, the best heart surgeries are performed. If there are people who want to go abroad, it is just their own wish. We do not recommend anyone going abroad. The waiting time here is very small; methods have become very fast. You read in the news about the sophisticated operations performed by your physicians.

In some of the provinces I visited, such as Kermanshah or Sistan va Baluchestan, which are remote, I saw that indeed we have the same resources in the area of heart procedures that we have in Tehran. Highly skilled physicians have gone there and are doing great work. This is all connected to providing treatment and health services. The result of the work is what I am saying now. We have attended to the needs of the villages. We consider health houses, health centers, and health services as a priority. We have expanded them throughout the entire country. Today, 17,000 health houses and centers are offering services to the people, educating them, especially the women. They usually go to the villages and educate the men and women using the children of the village. There the families know each other, and they provide guidance and supervision to the children.

Prior to the revolution, there were 4,000 health houses; prior to the Plan, these had increased to 10,000; today there are 17,000. We have another extensive program to ensure that by the end of the Plan no village will be without a health house. Care has been taken to make water, electricity, and health services available to the people so that the people do not use unsafe water, so that mothers do not use improper food, and so that they are careful to maintain health in the villages.

Prior to the revolution, providing safe drinking water, which is the most important issue for public health, was fairly insignificant. Early in the Plan, 70 percent of the people in villages had access to it; but today, 85 percent of the people of villages have safe water. It is only in small villages, whose turn has not yet come, where they do not have it. In terms of vaccinations against common diseases that usually killed many people in cities and villages prior to the revolution, prior to the Plan, 67 percent of the people had access to them. Today the total has reached 95 percent, the result of which is the prevention of childhood death.

Because of health care, childhood deaths are as follows: Prior to the revolution, out of every 1,000 people in the villages, 120 died. Prior to the Plan, 37 out of 1,000 died. Now, 33 out of 1,000 die, which is a normal figure. The World Health Organization sees Iran as being at a good standard level in the world. This is because of the health work that has been done for the people.

As for the health of school children, we have seen a large figure in the budget for free food in the schools of deprived regions, where children usually do not have enough food. In schools they are given food, milk, dates, or pistachios. About 3 million children receive food every day throughout the country. Another matter that has been addressed is guidance provided by the health houses and proper advertisement. The population growth was a threat for Iran, since we could not control it. Prior to the revolution, it was 3.9 percent, and before the Plan it was 3.2 percent. By the end of 1372 [20 March 1994], it was 2.3 percent, and today it is less. This is a good rate of growth; if we maintain this rate of growth, we can control it.

One important aspect of our work has been our attention to insurance. So far, our actions have not been sufficient, and this year we will take a great step. The actions that we have taken so far are as follows:

Before the revolution, a small number of people were insured. After the revolution, until the year before the Plan, about 13 million people were covered by adequate insurance. Today, 17 million have coverage, in addition to government employees and the military and law enforcement, which comprises an additional several million.

The rest of the people are not insured. In the Second Plan, we must do two important things. One concerns health insurance and another social insurance. Social insurance is very extensive, and we have left it for subsequent years. In other words, we must provide unemployment insurance and accident insurance so that people are secure in knowing that if they become unemployed, they will receive some salary and at least

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have a minimum subsistence. We are designing it, and it is not a part of my discussion for today. What is a part of my discussion is health insurance.

The Ministry of Health and Treatment has prepared a bill that has gone to the Majles and was ratified by the Majles. We set aside about 40 million tumans in funds for it. In addition to what we were spending on health and treatment so far, this year we have also added a large figure to it.

Now we are prepared to cover the rural and urban people, the business people and industrial workers, the unemployed, and every man, woman, and child. This is the only way to reform the health and treatment situation.

If you go to a developed country, you will see that they do not have treatment problems, because everyone is insured and has access to physicians, and when they get sick, the family is not burdened by massive expenditures. Of course, they pay a small amount.

We know that there are some people who cannot pay for their insurance. We have thought about them and have placed a special budget at the disposal of the Imam's Emergency Committee and authorized the Committee to pay the insurance premiums of all who are unable to pay.

I have been told that until today, 2.5 million people have gone there and the Committee has paid their insurance premium. I emphasize that whoever else cannot pay throughout the country should go to their local Emergency Committee. They will investigate, and if it is determined that they cannot pay, their insurance premiums will be paid and these people will be insured without paying anything. You might say, well the doctors will not accept such insured patients. Of course there are such instances, but we are assuming that this will not happen; we will oversee it, and the doctors will accept them from now on. I myself went this year to a hospital where such insured patients were hospitalized. There were childbirth, surgery, and a long list of medical services. I went to the bedsides in the hospitals. I asked numerous questions. The patients were very satisfied and said that they were hospitalized without being charged any amount; no one bothers them, they give them medicine, and they are not in a hurry to release them. Whenever I saw an insured person in a hospital, he was satisfied. I recommend that all the people go and insure themselves. Those who have the money, the businessmen and merchants who have the money, who have an income, should be insured. The government pays a large amount for insurance for those who are insured. On the basis of this action, we must reform the rates so that the doctor does not think that because an insured person comes to him he will be paid less. We should pay him an appropriate fee so that he can admit any patient and obtain their fees on the basis of government rates.

We thought that the poor and indigent would be insured at government expense, the wealthy would insure themselves, and the government would pay its own share. We hope that in a year or two, we will be able to implement in our own country the same plan that exists today in the most developed countries.

We now have the resources. We have no shortage of hospitals. We have prepared ourselves. We have no shortage of doctors. We have no shortage of medicine. We have no shortage of medical equipment. With the preparations made, we are hopeful that in the part which only requires the cooperation of the people—we need the people's trust here—the people will come and insure themselves. Of course, it is possible that this year, which is the transitional period, given that the people are accustomed to a different method until they get used to insurance, some problems might occur, but this is a period that will quickly pass. It might be a few months. I hope with the readiness that exists today in the Ministry of Health and Treatment, you will be able to benefit in this important and fundamental sector, since justice requires it, and our Islamic justice requires us to prepare for the health and safety of the people and use of their talents. We have done our duty in the government and the Majles. God willing, you will benefit well from it.

According to the report of our correspondents, the temporary Friday imam of Tehran concluded his first Friday prayer sermon by reciting the Kowsar Sura.

Second Sermon

In the name of God the compassionate and the merciful. Thanks be to the Lord of the Two Worlds, and greetings to the Prophet of God and 'Ali, the Commander of the Faithful; Sadiqeh, his daughter; 'Ali ibn Hoseyn; Mohammad ibn-'Ali; Ja'far ibn Mohammad; Musa ibn Ja'far; 'Ali ibn Musa; Mohammad ibn-'Ali; 'Ali ibn Mohammad; Hasan ibn 'Ali; and his son al-Hadi Mahdi. Greetings to all of them. I recommend to you to worship God piously and follow His instructions. [preceding paragraph in Arabic]

In the second sermon, we have many occasions this week that I must tell you about.

In the early hours of the new year, we had the message of the revered leader of the revolution, in which, thank God, our people received effective advice, to one or two points of which I will refer, and we believe that his guidance can have a great influence over the fate of the country and have a positive effect on our lives.

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By emphasizing his last year's recommendation with regard to helping correct the affairs of the country, this year he emphasized financial and economic discipline and work ethics.

He especially wanted us to evaluate and see to what extent we have succeeded in implementing those views. One of his wishes that he emphasized—and in private conversations that I have had with him I learned that he is very interested in this issue and it is in the interest of the country—concerns prevention of waste and extravagance, conservation, and having a spirit of conservation. In this phase, which is the constructive phase of the country, this is a recommendation and a strategic and fundamental concern.

Of course, many might think of simple things. Generally, the media does not delve deep into the issue and only repeats the superficial slogans about frivolous luxury and the like, but the issue is deeper than that. On the basis of his wishes and desire for a plan to implement this order, the government has chosen the consumer model as the solution.

We worked on the consumer model for two or three years. A large book has been prepared. In all instances, we specified what should comprise proper living methods, use of resources, and spending of resources. Of course, the model is being put into effect, and the Voice and Vision will be discussing some of these aspects one evening. In my opinion, this must be a comprehensive order and should be discussed in the form of a general educational movement for our people and government officials.

He was addressing the people, all the people, and the government. I will give you two or three examples of waste and, by way of contrast, proper procedures. One is, for instance, the issue of fuel. When he mentions preventing waste, it does not occur to a lot of people what happens in the country regarding the problem of fuel.

They think of superficial things such as clothing and cars, which is of course true, but what is eating up the country, and he emphasized it, are these kinds of issues, which is a task for the government and the people together. You know that we now use more fossil fuel per capita than any other country in the world. Using petroleum fuel or wood from the forests, which was customary before, or desert greenery, will result in stripping the pastures and still does. This is one of the worst kinds of waste. Every liter of gasoline that we use is improper. Every liter of diesel fuel that we use is improper. This is valuable wealth that your country is losing, and at the same time, it pollutes your environment. There is no profit in this waste, which empties the treasury tremendously. In today's world, a liter of gasoline is worth more than a dollar. In other words, in our country, it is over 400 tumans. Everywhere is like that, except for two or three countries, such as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, where it is about 40 cents.

It is our duty to conserve. The government must devise certain mechanisms, and the people themselves must be careful. If we use one liter of natural gas instead of a liter of diesel fuel, it will not only be better for the consumer, but we also will have served the country to a great extent—if a factory converts its fuel to natural gas or if a home converts its fuel to natural gas. Electricity is expensive, but they have installed cables to the villages from our great resources and provided it for the people. It takes a great deal from the treasury for the government to produce and transmit electricity to your home. Wasting means setting fire to public property. We should not turn on a light without reason. We should not leave an electric samovar on. We should not leave a heater on for no reason. We should consume only as much as we need. We do not say now that we do not need it, and we do not say you should not use as much as you need. The society must consume at the level of its needs. We all must decide to do it, and the government must also decide.

This is the action that was taken this year, and the price of fuel was raised somewhat. This should have been done in the previous years, so that we would not have so much of a difference today. It is not logical for diesel fuel to be 2 tumans per liter in Iran while next to us, in Turkey, it is 120 tumans per liter. Such differences cause problems, and there is the danger of this property being smuggled outside the country.

Of course, these prices cannot be raised all at once. We must make gradual reforms. At least in these conditions, the people must be careful not to waste for no reason.

Another issue is bread. We convert at least 2 million tons of wheat to bread annually only to throw it out. We give nearly 7-8 million tons of flour to the people now, and perhaps about 30 percent of it is either wasted because the baker ruins it or families buy in excess and throw it into the garbage or feed it to cows.

We should feed corn to cows, not bread. Should we buy wheat, store it in silos, turn it into flour, have the baker bake it, pay for the fuel, use labor, and then convert it to animal food? If from the beginning you buy corn and give it to the livestock, half of these expenditures will be eliminated. Such waste is dangerous.

We now import about 2.5 million tons of wheat. If we did not waste it, we would not need to import wheat at all. In other words, your country actually has enough

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food to feed itself. The waste that is shouted out by the leader is not something that would immediately cross your mind; you tend to think that luxury is somewhere else. These are all dangerous.

We had a good tradition in the past. If we saw a piece of bread in the street, we would stop, pick it up, kiss it, and put it in a corner. It was considered treason to trample this piece of bread. Now, they throw 2-3 million tons of bread into the trash and in this way insult God's bounty. At least bring back this old tradition. Bakers should be careful to bake the bread properly, not to ruin it, and the government should do its duty in terms of providing better guidance, mechanizing the bakeries, and the like.

The same is true of housing. In the winter, should we heat several hundred square meters of space for two persons who live in a house, at the price of fuel that I mentioned?

Or should we turn the temperature down so much in the summer? In fact, why should we build so large? We have prepared a consumer model. We said the consumer model in Tehran is 75 square meters and in provincial cities it is 100 square meters; the government supports buildings that are at this level. Extra buildings cost the country a great deal in terms of construction materials, labor, curtain rods, glass, and all that you see that is used in large houses. The consumer model indicates that when you go to Japan and think it is very comfortable, in fact, the home of a Japanese employee's family or a middle class family is not half as large as that of our employees. I myself went to their homes and saw wooden rooms in the form of match boxes and small tables. They have conserved extensively. In China, a person has at most seven or eight square meters of space in a house. In other words, a family of five has less than 40 square meters of a building. In Iran, however, when we suggest 75 or 100 square meters, many do not agree and say they want larger homes. In the United States, Europe, and very developed countries, it is not customary to have such large houses as it is in Iran, where those who build houses make them as large as they can.

The consumer model means that we must be careful ourselves.

You see how much we can save if we follow the consumer model, and the amount of building that exists in our country is truly enough for all of our people. We are now building 500,000 houses a year and still cannot meet the needs of the people because they build the houses so large. When a house is large, it requires more carpeting, more heat, more repairs, and all of this increases the cost of living. There is waste throughout the country.

We now have a moderate model for our whole lives, and we are not trying to create hardship. We now say, do not waste. We do not mean that people's nutrition should be reduced. People must be fed well in order to be healthy and for their children to grow. We are against waste and know that there are still people who do not have good nutrition. We must support them with the same protective policies. I explained here the recommendation that our beloved leader made in the early hours of the new year and asked compassionately of the government and the people to follow. Of course, this is a substantial issue, and the media will explain it to you in order to clarify it. Another example that I wanted to give you concerns the problem of telephones. You do not realize how much has been spent on the telephone that you have at home. One telephone line uses more than 40 kg of expensive material, either copper or plastics. These conversations you have, when ladies just pick up the telephone to talk with their acquaintances and then say that the cost of telephone is high, cost money: the operator in the center, the expensive equipment that regulates it between cities. They want to talk. They spend a lot of time. At the present, we are paying a great deal in subsidies for every telephone pulse so that it will not cost the people too much. You should just say a few words on the telephone, especially in international calls. Now something bad has become customary, which is also a result of the improper economic policies of the past, which will be resolved with the modification policy. Telephone calls abroad cost your government and country a great deal. Regarding the telephone calls that you make to other countries, you probably do not know: In a call between Germany and Iran, if the Germans call here, they must pay half the price to Iran in foreign currency. In other words, if it costs $2, they must pay $1. For every call that a German makes from Germany, he must pay half the price to our communications company. If an Iranian calls Germany, we must pay $1, half the cost, to them. Now, because it is less expensive in Iran and we have not been able to raise the price, families that have children there all recommend calling from Iran. A telephone call from Germany costs seven or eight German marks [DM]. They say, call from Iran. When the Iranian calls, the government pays for it. The DM7 or DM8 that we pay is paid out of your treasury. I recommend that you change this policy. Let anyone who is abroad call you, if the country is important to you. See what expenditures we have imposed? We now have thousands of lines to other countries—to all the countries in the world—and hours, millions of hours, of nonsensical conversation are carried out over these telephones, small talk and chit-chat, and every moment foreign currency pours out of the pocket of your country. Now, if the other party

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calls you, foreign currency enters the country. This is the explanation of the consumer model, and you have been advised to follow it.

Another issue that we have to consider, our important occasion, is the day that the Islamic Republic became official, which is an extraordinarily bright and blessed day in the entire history of mankind, and we have no other day like it in our history. It is a very bright and noble day.

Since 1,400 years ago, this is the first day that history has witnessed a nation taking part in a referendum and voting to live under the auspices of the Koran and wanting to have an Islamic Republic. With its movement, our country earned distinction in the Islamic world.

Something was done in Islamic history that will last, and no power can put out this great movement that has started. You see, it has been 16 years that they have been trying hard to put out this sacred torch, whereas every day this torch becomes brighter. The results of the vote of you people in the referendum—over 98 percent voted, which is unprecedented in free voting by the people—the effects of it in the world, its waves, they are all as vast, eternal, and everlasting as Islam itself and something that contented God and the Prophet of God. No one can say the people of Iran were forced to do it that day. You know that your government at that time had no resources to force the people. In those days, the antireligious minigroups had more power in the society. In the University of Tehran at that time, there was a Kurdistan group that sent arms to the outlaws in Kurdistan, and several armed groups created commotion in the streets. They even came and shot at the defenseless people and killed several people. They were coercing people, but the people came willingly and gave their vote, and today as well the same people are content. This was a great accomplishment. May God make happier the soul of the Imam and those who insisted on this action. At that time, there were people, there were liberal individuals, who even said in the Revolution Council, no, we want a "democratic republic" or a "people's republic" or a "republic." They did not want us to say "Islamic Republic." The Imam said: Not a word less, not a word more, "Islamic Republic." Then the people wanted the same. They did not believe that the people would cast so many votes. They thought the minigroups had influence among the people.

In those days, there were magazines and newspapers that were sold on street corners which tried to frighten the people of this idea, but the intelligent Muslim people gave their vote, and today they are witnessing the results. With this Islam, with this Islamic Republic, and with this religious power of the people, we can resist the tumultuous waves of U.S. oppressive conspiracies and not even budge. (Chants of God is great by the worshippers.)

Congratulations to you, the people and the Islamic nation, on this great day. Another event, which is bitter for us, is the loss of the beloved, brave, and alert son of the late Imam, our beloved brother, Haj Ahmad Aqa. For those of us who knew him, this was a very bitter and unpleasant event. Since early youth, we were in the trenches of the revolution together, and we know about his service. He never acquired an official position to explain his services to the people. He did not want his services to be explained. Prior to the revolution, indeed, he was our safe contact with Najaf and the late Imam. He would take important secrets from Tehran and Qom to Najaf and from Najaf to Qom and Tehran. This connection worked a great deal for the revolution.

He accompanied the Imam to Paris, and when the waves of the dangerous conspiracies and combat of the enemies of the revolution and Islam existed in those days to divert our Islamic movement, he managed things very well.

Since the victory of the revolution, God knows that there was not one day in which he did not render a great service during the time of the Imam, especially for the revolution. He was at the side of the Imam to protect the Imam. As you know, the Imam was an old man over 80 years of age, and with all that he had suffered in life and in exile, he needed care, the care that was given the Imam by Ahmad Aqa, and I know how much he took care of the Imam, especially after the Imam suffered a heart attack. Because of all the care, despite his illness, the Imam enlightened us for years, and he helped solve so many problems of the organizations and the government, especially in connection with the Imam. There was no problem that was not resolved by his hand and with the opinion of the Imam. He was always careful to inform the Imam quickly about the problems that the government had in the war, for the Imam to help. At the same time, it was not possible for all of us to have access to the Imam. I and others like me had access to the Imam, but the administrators of the country could not see the Imam at any given moment. His help was very constructive, and with one telephone call, a problem would be solved.

After the Imam, he spent all his efforts not to allow the works of the Imam to be destroyed. A great task has been accomplished in this connection. You still know very little about this matter. I am familiar with that institute. All the documents related to the Imam, the

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Imam's movements, the Imam's works, the Imam's secrets, the Imam's writings, the Imam's correspondence, the Imam's messages, he organized, categorized, and indexed. They will gradually be published, and this is a great capital. We do not have a capital in the Islamic world as vast as this, and in the revolutionary conditions, in our conditions, and from an unmatched leader in the world, a collection which is at the disposal of a nation. This collection is very valuable, and God willing in the future, his generous family and intelligent children will continue this great task in accordance with his last will so that they can preserve this great capital that is left for our history from the Imam and preserve it for the revolution. Fortunately, this great work has been done by Haj Ahmad Aqa.

We ask God to make his noble spirit a companion of his revered father and his lofty ancestors, and we ask God to grant patience to the noble family of the Imam, especially his mother, who has suffered a great deal because of them, with the martyrdom of her elder son, the death of the Imam, the death of Haj Ahmad Aqa, and the hardship she suffered in the period of struggle and loss and separation today. Other revered members, the sisters of the Imam and his relatives, may God grant them all patience and grant us the opportunity to appreciate their services. Our people showed that they are appreciative. I thank you good people for your vast presence in the mourning ceremonies that allayed the wounds to this family and ours. May God grant us the opportunity to continue the path of our Imam. (Chants of God is great by worshippers.)

Another issue that I must address briefly is the issue of regulating the market, which is one of our important programs for next year. Since late last year, we started it. As I told you, this is a very serious, intense, and comprehensive program. The period of action with regard to our production has passed. In the First Plan, we succeeded in putting production in order. Today, we produce more than 90 percent of the needs of our own country ourselves. Now is the time to put distribution in order. I promised the people that I would enter this expansive and difficult program, and I did. We have made the preparations for the task well. God willing, in the next two or three days, you will see a long list of various items of household needs for which prices have been regulated.

Here, I say to the producers that we will not try to impose on them either. We have even included the price of additional fuel and workers wages that have increased by 20 percent in the prices, and we shall reevaluate them once every six months. We have determined realistic prices with suitable profit for the producers and distributors. We will stop overpricing. The punishments are serious. The department stores are serious. Gradual pricing is serious, we must not price every item all at once. Whenever we see profiteering, and disruptive dealers are inclined on that side, we will go after them. God willing, gradually we will have an Islamic market after strengthening production in our country.

Another issue which is important for us is the irrational and reactionary actions of the Americans in the past few weeks. It is necessary for our people to become briefly familiar with the situation. Because of two or three serious defeats in which its station vis-a-vis the Islamic Republic of Iran was put into question, the United States is dealing with the issues of Iran in a reactionary and unwise manner. It has tried to separate other countries from us—such as Germany, Japan, France, and others—and could not do so. They did not listen to the United States and followed their own course. The U.S. Government became embarrassed before its people. The United States tried to disrupt our agreement with Russia, an agreement which is sound and has no connection with nuclear weapons. It is with regard to a nuclear power plant that many countries in the world have, and this is the right of all people. Besides, we are a government that has signed a nuclear weapons disarmament agreement, and every day the director of the international agency testifies that Iran is not on the course of building nuclear weapons at all. We are engaged in sound technical and economic actions to make use of the very important and essential technology of nuclear power that the world has today. The United States unjustly hopes to take away our right, and Russia understands that the United States is not truthful, because the United States itself is now even proposing to North Korea to give them light water reactors for power plants. They know that their rights are being violated. When they want to prevent the export of technology to them and inflict economic blows, they resist it. The United States has been defeated here, too, and now feels embarrassed.

Regarding the issue of Israel, worse than everything else, despite the pressure that they imposed to force all the countries of the world to praise them and to impose an unjust peace on the people of Palestine, the Islamic Republic merely declared its just position, and we had no involvement. We just said: This is not peace, it is an unjust, imposed action. The United States sees that it is not successful in that arena either, and the U.S. Government is embarrassed before its people. Here, too, it has assumed a reactionary position. With a sense of defeat, the U.S. Government officials are engaged in irrational actions. They lie officially. Well, this is shameful for the secretary of state of a superpower like the United States to lie, saying that Iran has stored

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chemical weapons on the Persian Gulf islands. They know that in the course of the war, despite the fact that for three or four years Saddam used chemical weapons against us, we did not use chemical weapons. We are not involved in this at all. They know this and yet they tell this lie, and it is very shameful.

A U.S. company outside the United States wants to sign an agreement for technical economic work in the sea to, for instance, build an oil platform. The U.S. Government officials became so obstinate that they came and cut their own economic vein. Their company would profit here. They want to have such a project. They have won it in bidding, bidding in which the French and others were present. They came and gave Iran certain advantages and bid at a lower price. In accordance with the rules of bidding, we gave it to them. Certainly, it was in their interest. If they do not come, we will build it ourselves. Today, Iran has great building power. Even though we could use their technology to build it, today we are not helpless ourselves to do such work. We can find the capital from somewhere else. Moreover, such a project has lots of customers. Many countries are eager to become partners in such projects. The United States only causes losses to its own companies. It only puts up a reactionary posture against a revolution out of obstinacy. In my opinion, this is not worthy of a superpower, which should be in control of itself. It must seek the roots of its failure. It applies pressure with the kind of behavior that no one likes. For instance, it tells Japan not to build the Karun dam for Iran, and they do not build it. They provided the budget and credit. Today, Iran is building the largest dams in the world itself. For us today, building a dam is commonplace, and our major expenditures are in rials. Here, the cement, steel, manpower, design, supervision, and everything for it is Iranian. Even when Japan gave "yen," it would have to be converted and spent in rials in Iran. It is not important whether or not they build it. The Iran-Japan Petrochemical Plant was in the past, and the Japanese left for fear of the war and paid us $1 billion in damages. Nothing happened. It produces 3.5 million tons of chemicals. Japan has no hand in it, and it is at our own disposal. We built it ourselves and operate it ourselves. The Iran of today is not the Iran of the shah's regime. Iran today is a country that designs and implements all its military, oil, petrochemical, natural gas, and industrial projects itself. Our contractors today are winning important bids in other regions. Those who, as I said, engage in reactionary actions are mistaken and will suffer the losses themselves, and we have nothing to fear in this issue at all and will continue our own way. If we suffer losses, we will not lose our revolution for such things. We have accepted the possibility of material damage but will not lose our principles and ideals. (Chants of God is great by worshippers.)

Finally, unfortunately the Islamic world still faces many problems. In Bosnia, aggression and oppression still govern, in addition to murder and slaughter. In Afghanistan, lack of security and instability still cause suffering; and in Iraq, Qarehbagh, Palestine, Lebanon, and many other places, unfortunately, Muslims are oppressed. May God grant sufficient zeal to the Islamic people to support the Muslims and give all Muslims the opportunity for understanding and presence on the scene to defend the principles of Islam and the Islamic nation.

Our correspondent's report also indicates that at the end of the second sermon, the temporary Friday imam of Tehran recited the Towhid Sura.

Speech of Minister of Interior

As the speaker before the Friday prayer sermons, Interior Minister 'Ali Mohammad Besharati said: Iran this year will implement more careful control on its joint borders with Pakistan to prevent the entry of narcotics smugglers.

Besharati added: Last year, 945 km of the joint Iran-Afghanistan border were closed in order to prevent narcotics smuggling.

He said: Fighting narcotics smuggling in 1373 [21 March 1994-20 March 1975] cost about $200 million, in the course of which 135 tons of opium were discovered and confiscated.

In continuation, the minister of interior called Iran the most independent country among 185 counties in the world and regarded its independence, freedom, and power the results of the Islamic revolution.

Besharati said: Eight years of imposed war during which 160 countries fought against Iran at the side of Saddam and the efforts of the counterrevolutionaries in recent years were neutralized by the united presence of the people.

He then referred to the government plan to fight price hikers and hoarders and emphasized that the government will fight the price hikers decisively.

Pakistan

Editorial Commends Government Policy Toward U.S.

BK1406131195 Lahore JANG in Urdu 14 Jun 95 p 10

[Editorial: "Pakistan-U.S. Relations"]

[FBIS Translated Text] U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan John Monjo has said that Pakistan and the United States

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share the same viewpoint on the Kashmir issue: We want a just solution of the Kashmir issue, and we are ready to mediate between the two countries for this purpose. Addressing a gathering of industrialists and traders at the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry, he said that all U.S. doubts and suspicions about Pakistan have been removed. That is why the Pressler law is being amended and aid to Pakistan will be restored soon. The U.S. ambassador deplored the fact that though the F-16s have been paid for, those planes were not supplied to Pakistan. He said that after the Pressler law is amended U.S. economic aid to Pakistan, including the F-16's [as published], will be restored.

It has been a long time since a U.S. diplomat to this region has expressed such positive and encouraging views on Pakistan-U.S. relations. The ban on supplying arms to Pakistan imposed during wartime in September 1965 ended in December 1979 with the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. There is no doubt that the decision to lift this ban was meant to serve the interest of the United States. In 1988 when the matter of the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan was settled, U.S. policy toward Pakistan changed again. It was openly said by responsible quarters in the U.S. that Pakistan does not enjoy the same important position now for the United States. After some time, military and economic aid to Pakistan was stopped by invoking the Pressler Amendment in reference to Pakistan's nuclear policy. After coming into power as a result of the 1993 elections, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto began efforts to revitalize Pakistan-U.S. relations. Opposition circles strongly criticised these efforts and accused her of compromising on national interests, and this criticism continues .

The present government has maintained the stance that it will not compromise on Kashmir and the nuclear policy. It has always termed the Pressler Amendment, being a unilateral sanction, a hurdle in the development of Pakistan-U.S. relations. It is satisfying that responsible U.S. circles had admitted even before Bhutto's visit to the United States that the Pressler Amendment has failed to stop the arms race in South Asia. A change in the U.S. policy regarding unilateral sanctions on Pakistan's nuclear program was visible, and Pakistan's position on Kashmir was also being understood better. The government still maintains that it will not accept any unilateral sanctions on its nuclear program and not deviate from its traditional position on Kashmir. This problem can be solved only by giving the Kashmiris their right of self determination according to the UN resolutions. Pakistan wants a peaceful solution of the Kashmir dispute and it has asked the United States to use its influence in this regard, but India termed such attempts unacceptable and turned them down. The United States is providing full assistance to India in various fields. It is the only superpower and considers Pakistan to be in the right on the Kashmir issue. There is no reason why it cannot persuade India to resolve this problem according to the UN resolutions. The atrocities of Indian troops against innocent Kashmiri people are known to the entire world. Six hundred thousand Indian troops have failed to crush the movement of the Kashmiri freedom fighters. Indian threats are creating serious dangers for peace in the region. The United States has to play a positive role for durable and permanent peace in the region. This statement by the U.S. ambassador will also provide moral support to the Kashmiri freedom fighters. As far as the question of amending the Pressler law is concerned, the issue is progressing in an encouraging manner and the attitude of the U.S. Congress is also very favorable. The credit for removal of the doubts and suspicions about Pakistan among the U.S. circles, steps taken for amending the Pressler law, and the indications of restoration of economic aid, including the return of the price of the F-16's, goes to the present government. It will not be an exaggeration to say that the government's foreign policy has been a success, at least with the United States, and it has broken the stalemate in relations between the two countries.

Report Details Indian Artillery Upgrade

BK1106105595 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 11 Jun 95 pp 1, 4

[Report by Mohammad Yasin: "Indian artillery assumes dangerous dimensions"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, June 10 — Defence analysts in Pakistan are closely monitoring a massive upgradation of the Indian artillery following the induction of missiles, long-range rocket launchers, self-propelled guns from Russia and now the medium guns to be mounted on the chassis of T-72 main battle tank.

They feel that the Indian artillery, which already enjoys three to one numerical superiority over Pakistan, may post a serious threat to Pakistan due to its capacity to inundate areas both close to forward line of troops as well as in the depth with hardly any comparable retaliation from the Pakistani guns.

According to defence experts, for Pakistan the best option is to go all out in developing its indigenous missiles having range of well over 300 kilometers with a dead accuracy to prevent India from achieving a fire power superiority in crucial areas.

According to report by Voice of Germany, Indian army plans to purchase 600 guns of 155 mm barrel at an

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estimated cost of two billion US dollars. for this purpose field trials are being presently conducted in four versions of the gun being provided by Britain, France, Slovakia and South Africa. The four bidding companies each assembled their gun turret on a T-72 tank chassis in India and trained an Indian army crew to test the gun. T-72 Main Battle Tank is now being manufactured under licence in India.

Earlier reports indicated that India has contracted 120 pieces of 152 mm SP guns from Russia on a three year lease at a cost of [rupees] Rs 10 million a piece. In addition, India is purchasing ammunition worth Rs 4 million for these guns for use during the lease period.

The Indian army went for leasing of the Russian guns, rather than buying, as it intends to standardise on 55 mm calibre. India already has 110 FH 77B 155 mm towed howitzers purchased from Sweden's bofors in 1987. It is also upgunning over 900 guns of 130 mm calibre of 155 mm calibre using the kit being provided by Soltam Company of Israel at a cost of 10 million a piece. 200 guns have been modified so far.

The thrust of the Indian artillery is, however, on self-propelled guns which, according to Jasjit Singh, an Indian defence analyst, is the only option to ensure survivability of the guns in the present operational scenario. With gun locating radars now available with both Indian and Pakistani artillery, a gun position is likely to be subjected to counter bombardment seconds after the gun has fired.

The maximum range of these guns is around 30 km. To engage the targets beyond 30 kilometers and sort of 40 kilometers, the minimum range of Prithvi missile, India would soon be inducting PINAKA rocket system developed by Indian Defence Research and Development Organisation. This 12-Tube rocket system can fire equal number of missiles having a warhead of 100 kilogram in 60 seconds from a single vehicle or 216 rockets from a regiment in the same time.

The Indian claim that PINAKA can devastate key strategic targets such as oil dumps, troops concentration and armoured columns by landing a barrage of projectile in quick succession, virtually wiping out every thing in an area of 500 square metres.

There is a general consensus in the Indian army and air force that in future major thrust would be on missile development programme both for offensive as well as defensive programme. Prithvi, the surface-to-surface missile, having a range of 40-250 kilometres is likely to become the mainstay of Indian artillery as well as airforce.

India has already raised a missile group having three units which would soon the equipped with the Prithvi. Despite pressure from Western countries and USA India has opted to go for the deployment, though the weapons system has not been moved as yet to the battle locations. Even if Prithvi is not nuclear tipped, with devastating ammunition like fuel air explosive, anti-armour bomblets and anti-personnel grenades, Indian artillery will be able to engage targets deep in Pakistan territory with little retaliation from Pakistan whose missile programme has yet not taken off ground.

Editorial Warns of Indian Missile 'Threat'

BK1306091095 Peshawar THE FRONTIER POST in English 13 Jun 95 p 6

[Editorial: "Responding to the Prithvi threat"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Foreign minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali has indicated that Pakistan might go ahead with indigenous missile production programme if India deployed Prithvi missiles along the borders. The foreign minister, who was winding up a debate in the National Assembly Sunday [11 June], said the Pakistani response to the deployment of the Prithvi missile would be within the parameters of Missile Treaty [as published] Control Regime (MTCR). He echoed the fear, pervasive among the country's defence analysts, that Prithvi was bound to act as a tension multiplier in the subcontinent. Sardar Asif's statement, incidentally, has coincided with reports that government is thinking in terms of increasing the defence budget this year. That the development of Prithvi missile, and its implications for Pakistan's security, must have weighed heavily while going for the decision to enhance current defence expenditure, is quite evident. India, therefore, is clearly responsible for the jacking up of the military spending much to the chagrin of pacifists in South Asia. Pakistani leaders have lately been asking the world to take cognisance of Indian designs in the region. For the moment Pakistan is bearing the full brunt of Indian aggressiveness, but other countries, in the vicinity and beyond will almost certainly start feeling its heat sooner rather than later. For instance, India has already test-fired IRBM (Intermediate-Range Ballistic Missile) Agni and, before long, will be on its way to developing and deploying an ICBM (intercontinental Ballistic Missile). And if it is the ICBM category that the world is waiting before it will wake up to the dangers, one does not have to tell that it will be too late by then.

The Americans have now started expressing their unease over the continuing missile build-up by India. The problem is that they still regard the threat of Indian missile and nuclear development in the subcontinental

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context. To ignore the fact that both India and Pakistan have the makings for the nuclear bomb — and the hostility to set off an arms race, or worse a nuclear Armageddon in South Asia — is bad judgement on part of the international community. While the United States and its allies are doing their damndest to stanch the flow of nuclear technology to what are known as world's pariah states, nothing substantial is being done to stop India from pushing the subcontinent into another round of paranoid militarisation. Pakistan clearly occupies the high moral ground as it has expressed its readiness, time and again, to sign the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty [NPT] and the MTCR, provided India can be made to do the same. The regional approach to the NPT and MTCR, which Pakistan favours, irks India, for it thinks big. And this is the heart of the mater. Pakistan will, unfortunately, have to find an answer to the Prithvi challenge.

Daily Urges Official Response to MQM 'Gesture'

BK1306144295 Karachi NAWA-I-WAQT in Urdu 12 Jun 95 p 10

[Editorial: "The Decision To Defer the Protest Campaign and the Need for a Positive Move"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In view of the rapidly changing political situation and the proposals and suggestions made by members of the Muhajir Qaumi Movement [MQM] Coordination Committee and other responsible people, MQM leader Altaf Hussain announced a temporary suspension of the protest campaign, saying the call for protest has been withdrawn as a goodwill gesture. Now is the time for every Pakistani to play their role.

Karachi as well as the entire country was gripped by a sense of anxiety and apprehension during MQM leader Altaf Hussain's 12-day ultimatum following Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's remarks about the MQM and its leader. Karachi — already a powder keg — could not bear any more agitation or anarchy. The government tried to silence those who pleaded for talks by saying that no talks could be held at gunpoint. It said Altaf Hussain should first withdraw the threat of agitation; only then could talks be considered. In withdrawing the agitation call, even temporarily, Altaf Hussain has provided the government with an opportunity. It should no longer insist that talks cannot be held with terrorists or that Altaf Hussain should first restrain the terrorists' activities.

As for the current situation in Karachi, it requires a wide- ranging reform package. It is incorrect to refer to the situation as a fight between two factions of a linguistic group. Although recent operations bolster this impression, it is not wise to view this as the truth. The situation in Karachi is the outcome of a conflict between the Pakistan People's Party [PPP] and the MQM as well as an expression of the lingering grievances of the city's people. The element of popular revolt against the predominance and promotion of feudal culture cannot be ignored either. The anarchy in Karachi can also be attributed to India's attempt to take revenge for Kashmir. It is unfortunate that while India is conducting its battle with considerable calculation, we are engaged in issuing statements and counterstatements on most important national issues in pursuit of political expediency and parochialism. Just as the MQM and its leadership are not willing to think beyond the rights and interests of a linguistic group, the government is subservient to political expediency in the interior of Sindh and is unwilling to conclude any agreement with the MQM that might affect the rural vote there. The PPP government has tried to silence the people of Karachi by appointing an Urdu-speaking governor. Yet how can the MQM, which claims to be the representative party of the city, accept a governor who even yesterday was a PPP worker and who turns to the provincial and federal leadership for guidance on every confrontation?

Another agonizing aspect of the situation is that people related to the MQM, PPP, and other political parties are driven by their own interests and expediencies while a majority of the people of Karachi are suffering through no fault of their own. As the terrorists are engaged in crippling normal life in the city, the people's lives, property, and dignity are threatened by prevalent banditry. Criminals in the garb of political workers have also made people's lives miserable. Even kiosks selling betel leaves, wedding halls, and factories are not safe from their clutches.

Karachi is not home to just one or two linguistic groups. It is a miniature Pakistan in which Balochs, Pathans, and Punjabis have the same rights as Muhajirs, Sindhis, and other groups. The Muhajirs and Sindhis have the right to representation in municipal bodies and the provincial and national assemblies. Their voices are heard by governmental organizations. Other groups are largely deprived of this. Therefore, the government, the MQM, and Muslim League cannot do anything on their own to solve the Karachi problem. Together, the government, opposition, and MQM might conclude a package deal.

The two sides should shun their insolence and come to the negotiating table. As Hafiz Hussain Ahmad said, Altaf Hussain should prove his manliness. He should return home to face the charges against him and share in the people's joys and sorrows. He should not be overconfident about his popularity and think he is incapable of committing an injustice. Pir Pagara says that as long as Altaf stays outside the country he will live but as soon

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as he comes to Pakistan he will be killed. The judiciary should prove its credibility. Governments come and go, but government organizations should continue to function with dignity and honor. There may be people who consider Karachi and the MQM as separate elements, but no one can expect any improvement in the situation if they ignore the party or individual who enjoys the confidence of the majority of people in Karachi. It would be better if the issue of Karachi were resolved without any further waste of time. India wants to entangle us in Karachi, divert the world's attention from Kashmir, and destroy Pakistan through Karachi. We should not entangle ourselves in the trap set by India. We hope the government will fulfill its responsibilities as quickly as possible and, as hoped by Altaf Hussain, amiably respond to his goodwill gesture in a positive manner so there will be no need for any agitation or movement. Effective and influential forces should play a role in this regard.

Daily Reports on Recent Karachi Violence

BK1406084395 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 14 Jun 95 p 1

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Karachi, June 13 — At least seven persons, including a Lt of Navy and an MQM (H) [Muhajir Qaumi Movement — Haqiqi] worker were shot dead in different incidents of firing here Tuesday [13 June].

Lt Arifullah Naqvi of Pakistan Navy was shot and killed by some unknown terrorists in his car in the parking of his residence in Nazimabad. The deceased was posted at the PNS [Pakistan Naval Station] Tipu Sultan and was starting his car to proceed to his office when the terrorists struck.

Two persons were killed when some unknown armed men resorted to target shooting on a yellow cab in Pak Colony. The taxi driver Muhammad Azam and passenger Muhammad Nadeem died on the spot. The victim Nadeem is stated to be the worker of MQM (H). A dead body with bullet wounds was recovered from Korangi No 6 near telephone exchange. The deceased was identified, later, as Abdul Ghaffar. He is also stated to be a political worker.

In Baldia Town Tanveer Colony, a youngman Gul Fareed was gunned down by the armed men. He was a bus conductor.

An unknown man was found killed under the Essa Nagri Bridge in Pir Illahi Bux Colony. His identity could not be known. The deceased had bullet wounds.

Awal Khan was shot and injured in Shareefabad, a child Faisal was also injured in Pak Colony.

Some unknown armed men fired shots at a car near Old Exhibition killing one person and injuring another. The deceased was identified as Aslam Nathan and the injured as Sultan.

Editorial Views Diplomacy, Bilateral Relations

95AS0393A Karachi JASARAT in Urdu 25 Apr 95 p 3

[Editorial: "China, Iran, and Pakistan"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto said that improving political relations between India and Iran should not concern us. China and Iran are good friends of Pakistan and will remain our friends. What the prime minister tried to explain to the nation while referring to her visit to the United States as well as her opinion about the situation in the country, especially in Karachi, clearly show that, knowingly or unknowingly, she is becoming insulated from truth. What the prime minister has said in connection with Iran-India relations and about China shows that she does not likes facts. The prime minister said that Iran and China are our good friends and will remain so. If this is so, it is not so because of the actions of any Pakistani government. Geographical location, the regional situation, and the relations between the people of various countries have their own importance. These often are not influenced by government policies and stand on various issues. Still, diplomacy plays an important role in bilateral relations. When we review Pakistan's relations with Iran and China within this framework, it appears that a surfacial tension in relations has been observed recently. True, this tension is not adversely affecting our bilateral relations, however, some diplomatic complacency has played an important role in bringing India closer to China and Iran. We believe that Indian's initiative will effect Pakistan's diplomatic efforts in the long run. It is clear that Iran and China worry that the United States might use Pakistan against them. It is possible that these countries are wrong in their assumption. However, our government did not take any concrete step to alleviate this fear. The need for such steps has been felt for a long time. Chinese and Iranian support over the Kashmir issue is very important for Pakistan because of the regional tension. The fact is that this support has cooled recently. Iran's president did express concern over the Kashmir issue during his visit to India. However, there is a major difference between this expression of concern and the concern expressed by Iran two years ago. This reality is recognized even by an average citizen. No doubt, Pakistan's relations with China are very stable and China is helping Pakistan in various areas including defense. However, in the light of improving relations between China and India,

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it is necessary that Pakistan analyze its relations with China again and decide where it stands. We believe that Pakistan's relations with Iran and China are stable and can be further improved. However, we also have to learn how significant is this stable relationship in the light of India's relations with these two countries. For this, it is important that our prime minister understands the situation. Otherwise, Pakistan's diplomatic reach in this region will be limited.

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